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ABSTRACT

This collection of papers examines educational issues concerning K-college Asian and Pacific American students. The 10 papers are: (1) "Educational Aspirations of Southeast Asian Students" (Clara C. Park); (2) "The Effectiveness of Reciprocal Teaching with Vietnamese American Students" (Mai Dao); (3) "Exploring Pacific Knowledge and Classroom Learning in Micronesia: The Promise of 'Cultural Considerations'" (Sharon Nelson-Barber); (4) "Rethinking Multiculturalism: Attending to Indian American High School Students' Stories of Negotiating Self-Representations" (Nina Asher); (5) "Cultural Differences in Interactions around Mathematics Tasks in Chinese American and European American Families" (Carol Huntsinger, Paul E. Jose, David Rudden, Zupei Luo, and Dana Balsink Krieg); (6) "An Ethnographic Study of Chinese American Family Involvement in Young Children's Education" (Sau-Fong Siu); (7) "Am I Indian, American, or Indian American? Studying the Home and School Experiences of Indian Bicultural Adolescents" (Sapna Vyas); (8) "Socialization Experiences of Asian American Students in Professional Schools: A Case Study" (Zhixin Su); (9) "Korean Adopted Young Women: Gender Bias, Racial Issues, and Educational Implications" (John Palmer); and (10) "Multiple Dimensions of Ethnic Persons: Listening to Korean American College Students" (Gilbert Park). (Papers contain references.) (SM)

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Research on the Education of Asian and Pacific Americans

EDITED BY
Lin Goodwin · Stacey J. Lee

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Research on the Education of Asian and Pacific Americans

edited by

Clara C. Park, A. Lin Goodwin, and Stacey J. Lee

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PREFACE

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the number of Asian and Pacific Islander Americans is nearly 11.3 million, 4.1% of the entire U.S. population. This figure represents an eightfold increase from a mere 0.5% of the U.S. population in 1960 (877,934/Asian Americans only). Over the last four decades, the ethnic composition of this group has become increasingly diversified, expanding from what was once a primarily East Asian population to encompass multiple Asian and Pacific Islander groups with a great range of linguistic and sociocultural backgrounds. This growth in the Asian and Pacific American population is also reflected in the nation's school classrooms. Yet despite these changing classroom demographics, there is very little research available for use by educators regarding appropriate education of Asian and Pacific American students. The intent of this book is to provide much-needed information on Asian and Pacific American students and to help shape the educational practices and programs for these students.

This research anthology is the first volume in a series sponsored by Special Interest Group—Research on the Education of Asian and Pacific Americans (SIG-REAPA) of the American Educational Research Association and the California Association for Asian and Pacific American Education. This book sheds important light on the educational issues concerning Asian and Pacific American students in grade levels K-college. Each chapter offers unique insights into Asian and Pacific American education, providing crucial information necessary to understand Asian and Pacific American students' family interactions, educational aspirations, and identity development, as well as instructional strategies to work with Asian and Pacific students. This knowledge base can inform researchers and practitio-

ners, as well as policy makers, of effective instruction for Asian and Pacific American students at all levels.

The series intends to be a national voice for the education of Asian and Pacific Americans, and provides an integrated view of new knowledge in the field of Asian and Pacific American education from the scholar -practitioners' perspectives. Chapters in Part I discuss topics relevant to K-12 education whereas those in Part II mostly address higher education issues, particularly socialization experiences and Asian American identity development. Specifically, in chapter one Clara C. Park compares the educational aspirations of Southeast Asian students (Cambodian, Laotian, Hmong, and Vietnamese) with those of White students. In chapter two, Mai Dao focuses on reciprocal teaching as an effective instructional strategy for Vietnamese American students. Then in chapter three, Sharon Nelson-Barber discusses culturally-relevant curriculum for Micronesian education through the incorporation of ethnomathematics and ethnoscience. Chapter four by Nina Asher examines the discourse of multicultural education through the experiences of South Asian high school students. Chapter five by Carol S. Huntsinger, Paul E. Jose, David Rudden, Zupei Luo, and Dana Balsink Krieg and chapter six by Sau-Fong Siu delineate family influences upon Chinese American children's school success. Chapter eight by Zhixin Su explores the socialization of Asian American students in professional schools, that is, law, medicine, and education, and provides a unique perspective on why Asian American parents do not encourage their children to become teachers. Chapter seven by Sapna Vyas and chapter ten by Gilbert Park explore identity development of Asian American students in educational contexts, while chapter nine by John D. Palmer discusses how gender bias and racism affect Korean American young women's racial identity development. The chapters by Vyas, Park, and Palmer give food for thought for concerned educators who aim to provide effective education for Asian American students of all levels.

Research on the Education of Asian and Pacific Americans is the product of hard work by many individuals. The co-editors are deeply grateful to the chapter authors for their unique contributions and multiple revisions. We sincerely hope that our readers will enjoy this anthology and find it to be a valuable resource.

Part I

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATIONAL ISSUES: ACHIEVEMENT, FAMILY INFLUENCE, AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDENTS

Clara C. Park

INTRODUCTION

Asian Americans constitute the fastest growing population in the United States with almost 100% increase from 1980 to 1990 (Ong & Hee, 1993; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993a). Currently there are approximately 11.3 million Asian Americans, which are 4.1% of the nation's total population (276 millions) (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 2001). Among these Asian Americans, Southeast Asians (Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian and Vietnamese) are new immigrants who came to the United States in the 1970s mainly as political refugees due to the political upheavals in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (Hune, 1979) unlike Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, and Filipinos who have relatively long American roots even prior to the Immigration Reform Act of 1965. These Indochinese refugees escaped persecution from the communists in their native countries in search of political asylum. Children of these Southeast Asian refugee immigrants who accompanied their parents to the United States and those who were subsequently born to these refugee immigrants and other Southeast Asian parents in the United States constitute *Southeast Asian students.* Many children of Southeast Asian refugee parents suffered interrupted schooling in

refugee camps in Thailand and developed minimal literacy skills in Thai or in their native language prior to their admission into the United States. They had very limited pre-immigration schooling experiences. Thus, Southeast Asian students are an emerging ethnic group in U.S. public schools with very different academic needs and patterns from East Asian students (Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans) who had solid pre-immigration schooling experiences, came mostly from middle class origin, and whose cultural values were deeply rooted in the Confucian tradition that valued educational achievement (Park, 1991, 1997, 1998).

Southeast Asians have distinct and diverse cultural values such as respect for authority, commitment to family traditions, strong social hierarchy, and male dominance. These cultural traits are exhibited in family socialization patterns that are quite different from other ethnic groups (Bliatout, Downing, Lewis, & Yang, 1988; Chuong, 1999; Goldstein, 1985; Lewis & Luangpraseur, 1989; Ouk, Huffman, & Lewis, 1988; Trueba, Cheng, & Ima, 1993; Um, 1999; Vang, 1999). Southeast Asian parents tend to hold higher educational and occupational aspirations for boys than for girls. They also tend to be more permissive with boys than with girls. Furthermore, they encourage their children to be reserved rather than expressive.

Moreover, within these Southeast Asian groups, a significant cultural diversity is observed (Lee, 1996; Peng & Lee, 1991; Trueba, et al., 1993; Young & Pang, 1995). In general for Vietnamese, due to more than a thousand years of Chinese influence, the Confucian philosophy is very much alive and sets a powerful interpersonal norm for daily behaviors, attitudes, and practices demanding reflection, moderation, persistence, humility, obedience to superiors, and stoic response to pain. Also, they tend to believe in the value of education. There are many Catholics among Vietnamese students, whereas approximately half of Hmongs are Christians and the other half Buddhists. However, the great majority of Cambodians and Laotians are Buddhists (California Department of Education, 1994; Um, 1999; Vang, 1999). In contrast, Hmongs are tribal people who lived in the highlands of Laos and did not have their own written language system until the 1950s. They believe in animism and ancestor worship. Also, the great majority of Vietnamese parents tend to be better educated than Cambodian, Lao, and Hmong parents, although the great majority of all Southeast Asian students similarly experienced interrupted schooling prior to their immigration to this country and carry emotional and psychological scars of war and family tragedies (California Department of Education, 1994; Chuong, 1999; Hune, 1979; Um, 1999; Vang, 1999; Young & Pang, 1995). In addition, there is a significant social class difference within each of these Southeast Asian groups depending upon the time of their immigration to the United States (Ima & Nidorf, 1998; Te, 1995). That is, Southeast Asians (mostly Vietnamese) who came to this country during the first

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wave of immigration around 1975, primarily came from an upper or middle class background in their country of origin, whereas those who came during the second and third wave of immigration since1978 were more likely to come from lower class background and rural origin. More often than not, these latter groups had very low level of education and skills not readily transferable to the western industrialized context. However, there is a general picture of well-being and successful adjustment of Southeast Asian immigrants as observed by various studies (Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore, 1992; McNall, Dunnigan, & Mortimer, 1994; Rumbaut & Ima, 1988; Vang, 1999, p. 233), although there have been a few reports of less than smooth transition to American society (Gauss, 1990; Ima & Nidorf, 1998; Um, 1999; Vang, 1999).

Due to these diverse backgrounds, Southeast Asian students from various cultural groups show different academic needs and patterns from East Asian groups (Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans). For example, in the 1985–1986 school year in the San Diego School District, the dropout rate among the Vietnamese was 10.7% while only 6.2% of Chinese and Korean students were dropouts (Rumbaut & Ima, 1988). In the Seattle School District in 1986–1987, 29.2% of the Chinese American students scored below 50th percentile on the reading portion of the California Achievement Test, while 55.7% of the Vietnamese did not score well on this measure (Pang, 1995). Since students' school performance is an important intervening variable for their educational aspirations, the diversity in these students' school performance and achievement patterns is worth notable. However, in the California public schools in 1998–1999, the dropout rates of 9–12th grade Asians (all Asians excluding Filipinos without ethnic breakdowns among various Asian American groups), Filipinos, and Whites were 1.5%, 2.2%, and 1.7% respectively, whereas the state average was 2.8%. Among 12th grade graduates who took the University of California and California State University required courses, 59.2% were Asians, 45.4% Filipinos, and 40.6% Whites, whereas the state average was 35.6% (California Department of Education, 2000a,b). These figures clearly indicate that as a group Asian American students' school persistence and achievement surpassed the state averages in spite of the diversity within the Asian American group.

Educational aspirations reflect a state of mind that motivates youth to strive for educational success (Caplan, et al., 1992) while they can be treated as a cognitive state shaped by the expectations of significant others, notably, parents, teachers, and peers (Campbell, 1983; Davies & Kandel, 1981; Sewell, 1971; Sewell & Shah, 1968). Aspirations are conveyed to youth either directly or indirectly by significant others (Hauser, Tsai, & Sewell, 1983; Sewell, Haller, & Ohlendorf, 1970; Sewell, Haller, & Portes, 1969; Sewell & Shah, 1968). Thus, parental influences are crucial because

parents provide financial means, set high standards for school achievement, and psychologically nurture their children's academic success.

According to Kao and Tienda (1998), family socioeconomic status (SES) not only contributed to ambitious aspirations in eighth grade but, more importantly, to the maintenance of high aspirations throughout high school years. They contended that the early aspirations of White and Asian American students (with no ethnic breakdowns among various Asian groups) could be made relatively concrete in comparison to those of African American and Hispanic students because White and Asian students received additional instruction at home and in a variety of subject areas, and could be better informed of college choices than African American and Hispanic students who did not have such resources due to their low family SES background. Kao and Tienda (1998) also noted that parents' educational level positively contributed to children's educational aspirations. Similarly, earlier research studies also examined parents' socioeconomic status, parents' educational level, and parents' influence as determining variables for children's educational and occupational aspirations (Duncan, Featherman, & Duncan, 1972; Sewell, 1971).

Sue and Okazaki (1990) contended that Asians tended to overcompensate for the liabilities of their minority group status by overachieving scholastically, which was a culturally induced, but functional behavior relative to their limited access to such fields as politics, sports, and entertainment. On the other hand, Ogbu (1991) and Gibson (1991) indicated that Asian immigrants were relatively successful because they were voluntary immigrants who were unhampered by such dysfunctional coping strategies that often resulted in unsuccessful educational and socioeconomic outcomes of caste-like minorities such as African Americans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and American Indians who had low educational aspirations because they did not believe that school success would likely to bring later social and economic success. However, Portes (1999) asserted that the influence of cultural background of immigrant children remained enigmatic and could not be disaggregated entirely by key demographic and sociopsychological factors, which explained almost 40% of the variation in student achievement.

In addition, gender differences in educational attainment were also noted. According to Grant and Rong (1999), women, in nearly all ethnic and immigrant generation groups of Asians, African Americans, Mexicans, other Hispanics, and non-Hispanic whites, made as much, if not more, progress in U.S. schools in comparison to male counterparts of similar age, ethnicity, and immigration generation. As youth that were immigrants or children of immigrants made their way through U.S. schools, the educational attainment of girls and women thus far appeared to be on a par with, or ahead of, boys and men. In addition, educational attainment differed by immigration generation, with the child of immigrant generation generally

attaining more education than the generation before or after it (Kao & Tienda, 1995; Portes & Rumbaut, 1990; Rong & Grant, 1992). Kao and Tienda (1998) also noted that the educational aspirations of girls were comparable with those of boys, if not higher. A similar trend was observed in a recent California State report (California Department of Education, 2000b). Among 12th grade graduates in California in 1998–1999, more girls (38.2%) than boys (32.7%) completed the University of California and California State University required courses. Likewise, more Asian American girls (62.2%) than boys (56.2%), more Filipino American girls (50.5%) than boys (40.2%), and more White girls (44.1%) than boys (37%) completed the UC and CSU required courses.

However, there have been few research studies about the educational and occupational aspirations of Southeast Asian students. Park (1998) conducted a study of educational and occupational aspirations of Korean youth in Los Angeles and found that Korean-American students had unusually high educational and occupational aspirations. Their aspirations did not vary by sex, ethnic identification, parents' socioeconomic status or educational level. She also found that students' aspirations closely mirrored their parents' aspirations for them and that parents had higher aspirations for sons than their daughters although there was no gender difference in children's educational aspirations for themselves. In a comparative study of Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese and White students in secondary schools, Park (1997) found that Korean American students had the highest educational aspirations among all groups and their educational aspirations were significantly higher than Whites, and that in raw scores all Asian American students in the study had higher educational aspirations than Whites. She also found that Chinese American students had the highest occupational aspirations among all groups and their occupational aspirations were significantly higher than Whites, and that in raw scores the occupational aspirations of all Asian American students were higher than Whites. Park also found that students' educational aspirations were closely related to their perceived parental aspirations and their school achievement, and that Korean American students had the highest perceived parental influence and school achievement. She also indicated that students whose parents had higher educational levels, had higher educational and occupational aspirations; and that there were significant gender differences in educational and occupational aspirations between boys and girls; and that girls had higher educational and occupational aspirations than boys. In addition, Asian American students' educational and occupational aspirations were significantly related to their length of residence in the United States. Asian American students who lived in the United States longer, had the highest educational aspirations;

Asian American students who lived in the United States the longest, had the highest occupational aspirations.

In her ethnographic study, Lee (1996) distinguished between the achieving Asian (Korean, Chinese, and Vietnamese) students and the not-so-achieving (Cambodian and Laotian) students in terms of their school performance and educational goals, and disputed the generalization of "model minority" stereotype to all Asian American students. Instead, she contended that some Southeast Asian students in her study, who were the children of new wave immigrants from Southeast Asia, were the other Asian American students who were actually "the antithesis of the Asian model minority."

Other studies (Centra, 1980; Endo, 1981) indicated that academic variables (e.g., grade point average and other test scores) affected the graduate degree aspirations of Asian Americans as a group but that institutional characteristics such as their affluence, selectivity, and predominant racial make-up did not.

Despite all the research studies reported, none of the above research specifically compared the educational and occupational aspirations of Cambodian, Hmong, Lao and Vietnamese students nor between these Southeast Asian groups and White students in secondary schools. This study is expected to shed important light on the educational and occupational aspirations of Southeast Asian students, as well as provide a comparative perspective of these Southeast Asian students and White students' educational and occupational aspirations.

Thus, the purpose of this research was to investigate the educational and occupational aspirations of Southeast Asian (Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian and Vietnamese) students in secondary schools and compare them with those of White students. This research explored the following hypotheses: first, students' educational aspirations would be significantly related to their parents' educational level, socioeconomic status, their perceived parental influence and school achievement (grade point average); second, Southeast Asian students' educational and occupational aspirations would be significantly lower than those of White students because of their parents' low educational level, socioeconomic status, and family backgrounds; third, there would be significant ethnic group differences in the educational and occupational aspirations among various Southeast Asian groups due to significant cultural diversity within these groups; fourth, there would be significant gender differences due to culturally prescribed gender roles, especially among Southeast Asian groups; and fifth, the educational and occupational aspirations of Southeast Asian students would be significantly related to their length of residence in the United States.

METHOD

Sample

A sample of 738 cases with 87.6% return rate and collected from 18 high schools (9–12th grade) in California in 1997–1998, was used. Among the 18 participating high schools, 14 schools were in southern California. The other four schools were in central California. The 738 cases comprised 355 Whites, 136 Hmongs, 133 Vietnamese, 71 Cambodian, 43 Laotian Americans. Three hundred eighty-eight (388) boys and 338 girls responded to the survey. Twelve cases did not have the information of gender. Grade level distributions were as follows: 184 students were in the 9th grade; 196 students in the 10th grade; 223 students, in the 11th grade; 130 students, in the 12th grade with two cases with missing information about the grade. The great majority (317 = 83%) of Southeast Asian students (383) were foreign-born; 60% (N = 125) of them have been in the United States for less than seven years; and 69% (N = 262) of them were in English as a second language (ESL) classes. More specifically, 94% of Hmongs, 88% of Laotians, 60% of Vietnamese, and 26% of Cambodians were in ESL classes.

In terms of demographic background, the great majority of Southeast Asian students belonged to low socioeconomic background whose parents were employed in the manual labor sector (Table 1). This phenomenon appeared very plausible given that the majority of Southeast Asians were new immigrants to this country. Likewise, the great majority of Southeast Asian parents completed less than high school (Table 2), similarly to what was reported in the 1990 census and in other studies (Chuong, 1999; Um, 1999; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993b; Vang, 1999). However, according to the number of students who received mostly A's and B's, Vietnamese students outperformed White students in school achievement while White students outperformed other Southeast Asian students (Table 3).

Table 1. Parents' Socioeconomic Background

	Cambodians		*Hmongs*		*Laotians*		*Vietnamese*		*Whites*	
	F	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*
High	9%	8%	3%	2%	7%	2%	12%	4%	23%	30%
Middle	30%	11%	24%	3%	14%	7%	20%	13%	53%	60%
Low	61%	81%	73%	95%	79%	91%	68%	83%	15%	10%
Missing	7%	9%	0	0	2%	2%	17%	23%	10%	18%

Note: F = father; M = mother

Table 2. Parents' Educational Level

	Cambodians		*Hmongs*		*Laotians*		*Vietnamese*		*Whites*	
	F	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*
Graduate Sch.	17%	15%	2%	0	11%	2%	14%	6%	24%	18%
4 year college	9%	9%	2%	2%	7%	5%	17%	10%	25%	29%
2 year college	13%	4%	12%	4%	12%	12%	20%	14%	23%	27%
HS Completion	10%	9%	4%	4%	5%	14%	24%	37%	22%	22%
Less than HS	51%	63%	80%	90%	65%	67%	25%	33%	6%	4%

Note: F = father; M = mother

Table 3. School Achievement

	Cambodians	*Hmongs*	*Laotians*	*Vietnamese*	*Whites*
Mostly A's	25%	29%	14%	36%	28%
B's	46%	39%	40%	44%	45%
C's	14%	15%	21%	9%	18%
D's	6%	1%	7%	2%	3%
I don't know	9%	16%	18%	9%	6%

Instrument

The survey questionnaire contained items dealing with background characteristics, educational and occupational aspirations, and grade point average. Questions to measure students' educational aspirations (2 items) were taken from Coleman, Campbell, Hobson, McPartland, Mood, Wienfield, and York (1966): How good a student do you want to be in school?, and How far do you want to go in school?, Questions to measure students' perceived parental influence (2 items) were slightly modified versions of the above two: How good a student do your parents want you to be in school?, and How far do your parents want you to go in school. These items were arranged in a Likert type. (For the item, How good a student do you want to be in school?, 5. One of the best, 4. Above the middle, 3. In the middle, 2. Good enough to get by, and 1. I don't care. For the item, How far do you want to go in school?, 6. Graduate or professional school, 5. Four year college, 4. Two year college, 3. Technical school, 2.High school completion, and 1. Less than high school.) Then, the combined scores of these two items were categorized into high (10–11), middle (7–9), and low (3–6) aspirations.

Students' occupational aspirations were measured using the question: When you finish your education, what occupation would you like to enter as your lifelong career? The specific occupations given as responses were scored using categories based upon the first digit of the Duncan's (1961) socioeconomic index. Their grade point average for the year immediately preceding the survey, was asked in a straightforward manner using Likert type categories (5. Mostly A's, 4. Mostly B's, 3. Mostly C's, 2. Mostly D's, and 1. I don't know.), again following the suit of Coleman et al. (1966). (1 was assigned for "I don't know" because it is very likely that most students remember their grade if it is better than C's and that the reason they checked "I don't know" was probably because they did not want to reveal their poor grades.) A special validity study (N = 700) conducted by Coleman et al. (1966) elicited self-reported achievement similar to a direct coding from school records in 93.6% of the cases.

Statistical Procedure

Multivariate analysis of variance (SPSS MANOVA), univariate F tests, and post hoc multiple comparisons of means tests (Scheffe tests) were performed. (The significance from the multiple comparisons of means analysis was determined on the basis of the Scheffe test because it is the most valid test for unequal sample sizes and the only one of the seven SPSS multiple comparisons of means tests that uses paired comparison of means and maintains total experiment Type 1 error at < .05.) Total N = 738 was reduced to 709 cases because 29 cases had missing information. For parents' socioeconomic status, the higher occupation of either parent was used. Based upon the first digit of the Duncan's socioeconomic index, 1–3 was classified into low (manual labor), 4–6 into middle, and 7–9 into high. For parents' educational level, the higher of either parent was used. Then, high school completion was classified into low, 2–4-year college education into middle, and professional or graduate school education into high. Students' academic achievement level was determined by using their grade point average (GPA) and broken down into high (A's), middle (B's), and low (C's, D's, and I don't know). Southeast Asian students' length of residence in the United States was categorized into 1–3 years (23%); 4–7 years (37%); 8–19 years (40%). It was because students who had been in the United States for less than three years would most likely be in English as a second language (ESL) classes and those who had been in the United States for more than eight years would probably those who were in mainstream classes and considerably acculturated to the American culture.

RESULTS

The results of multivariate analysis of variance (SPSS MANOVA) using ethnicity and students' gender as independent variables showed that the combined aspirations were significantly related to ethnicity, Wilks Lambda = .93, $F(8, 1346) = 6.38$, $p < .001$; and also to gender, Wilks Lambda = .99, $F(2, 673) = 4.66$, $p < .01$. The results showed strong associations between students' ethnicity and their combined aspirations, between gender and their combined aspirations. However, there was no significant interaction between ethnicity and gender, Wilks Lambda =. 99, $F(8, 1346) = 1.08$, $p > .05$.

Univariate F tests were performed to investigate the main effect of ethnicity and gender on students' educational and occupational aspirations and found that there were statistically significant ethnic group differences in educational aspirations, $F(4, 674) = .99$, $p < .001$ and occupational aspirations, $F(4, 674) = 5.05$, $p < .001$, and that there were significant gender differences in occupational aspirations, $F(1, 674) = 8.97$, $p < .005$, but there were no significant gender differences in educational aspirations, $F(1, 674) = 0.12$, $p > .05$. That is, across the ethnic groups, girls had higher occupational aspirations (group means = 2.56) than boys (group means = 2.38) rejecting the hypothesis.

To investigate ethnic group differences in educational and occupational aspirations, post hoc multiple comparisons of means tests (Scheffe tests) were performed. The tests revealed that White, Vietnamese and Cambodian students had significantly higher educational aspirations than Laotian students (Scheffe test, $p < .05$); and White students had significantly higher educational aspirations than Hmongs (Scheffe test, $p < .05$). The test also revealed that Vietnamese, Cambodian, White, and Hmong students had significantly higher occupational aspirations than Laotian students who showed the lowest occupational aspirations among all groups (Scheffe test, $p < .05$) (Table 4). What was notable here is that Vietnamese and Cambodian students showed comparable levels of educational and occupational aspirations to Whites whereas Hmongs showed lower educational aspirations than Whites, and Laotians showed low levels of educational and occupational aspirations than Whites.

Multivariate analysis of variance, using ethnicity, parents' educational level and perceived parental influence as independent variables, was conducted. The test results showed that the combined aspirations of the students were significantly related to their perceived parental influence, Wilks Lambda = .80, $F(4, 1334) = 38.63$, $p < .001$, but not to their parents' educational level, Wilks Lambda = .99, $F(4, 1334) = 1.70$, $p > .05$. There was a very strong association between students' perceived parental influence and their combined aspirations. But there was no significant interaction between ethnicity and perceived parental influence, Wilks Lambda = .96,

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$F(16, 1334) = 1.52$, $p > .05$. It means that regardless of the educational level, if parents wanted their children to go to college or graduate school and conveyed their wishes to their children, children appeared to internalize parents' wishes and aspired to go to college or graduate school. This was especially true because the majority of Southeast Asian parents had less than high school education. The current data showed that majority of them appeared to encourage their children to go to college regardless of their educational level.

Univariate F tests were conducted to investigate the main effect of perceived parental influence on the students' educational and occupational aspirations and found that there was statistically significant main effect of perceived parental influence on both educational aspirations, $F(2, 668) = 79.41$, $p < .001$ and occupational aspirations, $F(2, 668) = 11.61$, $p < .001$.

To investigate the different levels of perceived parental influence upon the educational and occupational aspirations of the students, post hoc multiple comparisons of means tests were performed. The tests revealed that there were statistically significant differences among students who had high, middle, and low perceived parental influence (Scheffe tests, $p < .05$) and proved that parent's educational and occupational aspirations for their children were important indicators of children's aspirations confirming earlier studies (Sewell, et al., 1970; Sewell, et al., 1969). That is, children whose parents had highest aspirations for their children, had the highest aspirations; children whose parents had lowest aspirations for their children, had the lowest aspirations.

Multivariate analysis of variance was conducted using parents' socioeconomic status and ethnicity as independent variables. The results showed that the combined aspirations of the students were not significantly affected by parents' socioeconomic status, Wilks Lambda = .99, $F(4, 1300) = 1.94$, $p > .05$, indicating that there was no significant association between parents' socioeconomic status and students' aspirations. However, multivariate analysis of variance results showed that the combined aspirations of the students were significantly related to students' achievement level (grade point average), Wilks Lambda = .91, $F(4, 1352) = 17.05$, $p < .001$. The results also showed strong associations between students' achievement and their combined aspirations. In addition, the test results showed a significant interaction between ethnicity and students' achievement level, Wilks Lambda = .96, $F(16, 1352), 1.75$, $p < .05$.

Univariate F tests were performed to investigate the main effect of students' achievement level on students' educational and occupational aspirations. The F tests results showed that there were statistically significant main effect of students' achievement level on students' educational aspirations, $F(2, 677) = 28.22$, $p < .001$ and occupational aspirations, $F(2, 677) = 13.98$, $p < .001$. Univariate F tests were also performed to measure the com-

bined effects of ethnicity and students' achievement level and found that there was statistically significant combined effect of ethnicity and students' achievement level on students' educational aspirations, $F(8, 677) = 2.63$, $p < .01$, but not on occupational aspirations, $F(8, 677) = 1.28$, $p > .05$.

To investigate the impact of students' achievement level on educational and occupational aspirations, post hoc multiple comparisons of means tests were performed. The tests showed that there were statistically significant group differences in both educational and occupational aspirations among high, middle and low achievers (Scheffe test, $p < .05$). That is, the higher the students' school achievement was, the higher their educational and occupational aspirations were. These findings indicate that students' school achievement is an important variable to explain students' aspirations and confirmed the findings of earlier studies (Centra, 1980; Endo, 1981).

Multivariate analyses of variance were performed by using Southeast Asian students' nativity, length of residence in the United States, and placement in ESL class, respectively. The results showed that the combined aspirations of Southeast Asian students were significantly related to their placement in ESL class, Wilks Lambda = .92, $F(2, 360) = 15.18$, $p < .001$; but not to their nativity, Wilks Lambda = 1.00, $F(2, 362) = .43$, $p > .05$; nor to their length of residence in the United States, Wilks Lambda = .99, $F(4, 642) = .76$, $p > .05$. Univariate F tests were performed to investigate the main effect of their placement in ESL class on their aspirations and found that there were significant differences in both educational and occupational aspirations between students in ESL and those in regular classes, $F(1, 361) = 24.36$, $p < .001$ and $F(1, 361) = 13.99$, $p < .001$, respectively. This means that Southeast Asian students in regular classes had higher educational and occupational aspirations (group means = 2.24 and 2.66, respectively) than those in ESL classes (1.80 and 2.39, respectively).

Table 4. Educational and Occupational Aspirations by Ethnic Group

	Educational Aspirations		*Occupational Aspirations*	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
Cambodians	2.0	.82	2.5	.61
Hmongs	1.9	.74	2.5	.60
Laotians	1.5	.74	2.0	.78
Vietnamese	2.1	.79	2.6	.56
Whites	2.1	.71	2.5	.72

Notes: Mean = ethnic group mean (The mean was computed based upon the following scores: high = 3, middle = 2, and low = 1); SD = standard deviation.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study found that Cambodian and Vietnamese students had statistically similar levels of educational aspirations to White students and that Cambodian, Hmong, and Vietnamese students showed statistically similar levels of occupational aspirations to White students whereas the Laotian students did not. In other words, contrary to general perception, selective Southeast Asian (Cambodian and Vietnamese) students' educational aspirations were not lower than those of White students. Likewise, Southeast Asian students' occupational aspirations were similar to White students except for the Laotian group. Thus, this study showed that there were significant intergroup differences between Southeast Asian and White students in educational and occupational aspirations, as well as intragroup differences among various Southeast Asian groups (Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian and Vietnamese). In fact, 45% of Southeast Asian students and 52% of White students in the current study wished to go to graduate or professional school after college. Seventy-seven percent of Southeast Asian students and 85% of White students wished to receive four-year college education or beyond.

Quite interestingly, this study showed that students' educational and occupational aspirations were not related to parents' educational level or socioeconomic status unlike the findings of previous studies in the American context. In fact, although the great majority of Southeast Asian parents belonged to low socioeconomic status and completed less than high school, Vietnamese and Cambodian students had similar levels of educational aspirations to White students except for Hmong and Laotian students, and that Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Hmong students had similar levels of occupational aspirations to White students except for Laotian students. Thus, this study showed that parents' socioeconomic status and educational level were not important variables to explain Southeast Asian students' educational and occupational aspirations. This may be attributable to the relatively easy access to higher education available in America. Therefore, it is very likely that many Southeast Asian students will take advantage of the opportunities of college education or graduate school available at relatively low costs, especially in California where two-year college education is almost free and tuition for four-year college is reasonably low. This means that many sons and daughters of Southeast Asian mechanics, manicurists, and factory workers with less than high school completion, have college or graduate school aspirations, which would probably lead them to middle or higher class occupations, such as nurses, engineers, or doctors or attorneys.

This study also found that students' educational and occupational aspirations were closely related to perceived parental influence and showed that children's aspirations closely mirrored their parents' aspirations for

them. In other words, regardless of their parents' socioeconomic status and educational level, students whose parents had higher educational and occupational aspirations for them had higher educational and occupational aspirations for themselves. This means that in spite of their low socioeconomic status and low educational background, Southeast Asian parents who had high educational and occupational aspirations for their children may influence their children's academic and career goals thus helping their children to aspire to go to college or graduate school and want to obtain a higher status career.

This study also showed that students' school achievement was an important intervening variable for students' and parents' educational and occupational aspirations, and that Southeast Asian students' school achievement was statistically comparable to White students' except for the Laotian students although many of them were new to this country and were still in ESL classes. In other words, Southeast Asian students' school achievement appeared to be better than the general perception of their low performance (e.g., Ima & Nidorf, 1998) although the majority of them may not exhibit "stellar" performance.

Furthermore, this study found that both boys and girls had the same levels of educational aspirations and that girls actually had higher occupational aspirations than boys. Unlike many Southeast Asian parents who held higher educational and occupational aspirations for boys than girls as observed in previous studies (Goldstein, 1985; Vang, 1999), this research showed that girls actually aspired higher status careers than boys and supported the findings of Lee's (1997) study of Hmong American women. This may mean that Southeast Asian girls would challenge the traditional concepts of being girls held by their parents, and would seek gainful employment outside their homes. Given the economic necessity and relatively equal educational and occupational opportunities available in the American society, Southeast Asian girls appeared to attempt to break away from their traditional female roles cherished in their native countries. In view of the fact that 83% of Southeast Asian students were foreign-born, 62% of them have been in the United States for less than seven years, and 69% of them were still in ESL classes, this would mean a dramatic departure from their traditional cultural beliefs and gender roles.

In addition, Southeast Asian students' educational and occupational aspirations were not significantly related to their length of residence in the United States, but their placement in regular or ESL (English as a second language) classes. In other words, Southeast Asian students who were in regular classes had higher aspirations than those in ESL classes, which appeared to reflect their relative English proficiency, sense of well-being in American schools, and acquisition of information concerning educational opportunities and career choices as they became better-adjusted to Ameri-

can public schools and society. Likewise, the low aspirations of these Southeast Asian students in ESL classes might be attributable to their lack of information about educational and career opportunities available in American society and their lack of role models in their immediate families due to relatively short immigration life. However, these students' low aspirations may be partly attributable to their teachers' benign neglect and/or low expectations toward them, which they may have internalized through daily interactions with them.

The findings of this study suggest that in view of the fact that the great majority of them (69%) are still in English as a second language (ESL) classes, Southeast Asian students may very well be able to realize their parents' relatively high aspirations if teachers play the role of a sincere academic advisor, culture broker, and community liaison, and if schools make school learning more relevant to these students' cultural backgrounds and provide additional instructional services for them either after school or on Saturdays for efficient transition into regular classes. In addition, schools may provide parent education workshops in order to help these Southeast Asian parents become active partners in their children's education.

In addition, future research would be necessary to investigate the educational and occupational aspirations among the next generation of these Southeast Asian students and compare them to see if their aspirations would be higher than White students' or their parent generation's.

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CHAPTER 2

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF RECIPROCAL TEACHING WITH VIETNAMESE AMERICAN STUDENTS

Mai Dao

INTRODUCTION

The conception of Asian Americans as model minorities, has often led to overlook the conditions of educational risk that affect students from relatively recent Southeast Asian (Vietnamese, Laos, Kampuchea) refugee families (Dao, 1991). Some of these issues include adjustment to the American academic milieu, scoring below the mean in standardized reading and writing assessments, and low levels of participation in American classroom discussions. These problems are not new, and are confirmed in anecdotal reports by many Southeast Asian students who have gone through American high schools. They are also supported by some standardized test data. For example, in 1986, Southeast Asians scored at the 28.5 percentile in reading and the 34.2 percentile in writing in the California Assessment Program testing (California Department of Education, 1986). Although current Southeast Asian American achievement test scores are not available statewide because students are categorized monolithically as "Asian American," Stanford Achievement Test (SAT 9) of the San Diego City Schools

reports break down scores by student ethnic background into Indochinese (i.e., Southeast Asian), and as such give a window into the performance of these Indochinese students. The total of 6,028 Indochinese students who took the SAT 9 (San Diego City Schools, 1999) is a sample large enough to make the San Diego data roughly representative of the performance of the Indochinese student population. Indochinese students' reading scores show a drop from the 69.3 percentile in 2nd grade to the 31.4 percentile in 11th grade, as compared to other Asian American students who score at the 84.3 percentile in 2nd grade and the 56.9 percentile in 11th grade, and Caucasian students who score at the 71.7 and 64.3 percentiles in 2nd and 11th grade respectively. Indochinese students' low reading scores in the 11th grade indicate that they are affected by the increasing demands of reading and comprehending high-level academic texts.

When these concerns are not addressed in time, the consequences are becoming more serious, particularly in terms of developing Southeast Asian students' linguistic competence and sophistication. The world community is moving toward an era of great technological advancement and competition in an international market. It is imperative that schools prepare the young generation to be the highly skilled work force that such a highly technological society will demand. More than ever, it is necessary to identify specific ways to enhance the language abilities and achievement of Southeast Asian students.

As an initial attempt to address this crucial issue, this study focused on new immigrant Vietnamese American students. Though there are no accurate official data from the government, extrapolations from the report by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (1998) give a demographic estimate of 955,264 Vietnamese in the United States. Vietnamese American students' enrollment in California public schools amounts to 75,900 (California Department of Education, 1999), making them the second largest linguistic minority in California. Yet, due to a lack of understanding, American schools have not responded adequately to the needs of Vietnamese American students. The fact that these students are highly motivated to survive in new environments, yet many of them are nevertheless failing raises a number of questions. How can we tap these students' strengths and hidden potential to successfully mainstream them into the regular academic environment? Is direct exposure to mainstream instruction sufficient to ensure academic success for these students? Why do some children from refugee families with comparable histories of loss, separation, and physical dislocation emerge at opposite ends of the academic and social adjustment spectrum? Specifically, what factors allow some children from refugee families to succeed?

These questions, contradictions, and concerns have steered this investigator away from the deficit model that has typically framed the education

of immigrant children, and led her to search for an alternative approach to teaching students the skills and strategies they need in relation to different contexts. This study is timely because there have been no previous studies conducted to investigate the effectiveness of specific instructional procedures appropriate to Southeast Asians in general, or to Vietnamese American students in particular.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Previous research findings indicate that language minority students need to acquire cognitive academic English proficiency in order to succeed in school (e.g., Collier, 1995). Although various approaches offered in the literature vary to a certain extent, there is, however, a common goal: How to foster the educational advancement of students from different sociocultural backgrounds in a culturally diverse society. To date, educators are still focusing on generally transitioning these students into English only classrooms where English is used as the sole medium of instruction. Many students take English as a second language classes, learn to speak English and learn to decode, but do not learn to comprehend text, to read critically and to discuss content. Traditional approaches have apparently not served these students well. As reflected in norm-referenced testing, mastery learning, and compensatory or remedial approaches or programs for students who differ from the "norm," traditional approaches have often been designed to reduce or remove their differences. Indeed, differences among students are typically perceived as barriers to literacy acquisition.

Current discussions and trends regarding the education of minority students have used Cummins' framework of empowerment and advocacy (Cummins, 1986; Jones, 1988) as the basis for addressing the educational needs of minority students. Cummins' framework for intervention recommends a significant change in the relationships between educators and minority students and between schools and minority communities. These changes will thereby promote the empowerment of minority students and the implementation of pedagogical approaches that "succeed in liberating students from instructional dependence" (Cummins, 1986, p. 32). An exemplary educational program implemented for the academic success of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is the Kamehameha program for Hawaiian children in Honolulu (Au & Jordan, 1981). The Kamehameha program employs an alternative method of teaching reading, which adapts school experiences to allow for cultural continuity and transfer of what students already know from their cultural background. Consequently, children's indigenous ways of gaining knowledge are respected and serve as scaffolds for literacy development.

Although Cummins' suggestion is valuable, it is a great personal and political challenge (if not a threat) to expect educators and policymakers to redefine their roles in prevalent "dominant/dominated" power relationships. Despite the fact that the Kamehameha project is considered highly successful, its model is not likely to be widely adopted, as most educators generally expect students to change to meet their demands, and not the other way around (Saville-Troike, 1991). Educational changes of such a dimension frequently threaten the existing power structure, and thus could be met with strong resistance and other societal expectations.

The very question of meeting the needs of people from different social and cultural backgrounds actually was the focus of Vygotsky's (1978) research on developmental theories. Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory of human development by its very nature offers one basis for a unified understanding of the diverse educational requirements for children whose cultural backgrounds are different from the majority culture (Sutton, 1988). Vygotsky's theory reconciles the functioning of individuals with that of the culture (Hiebert, 1991). Knowledge is a function of the learner's backgrounds and purposes. When this view is applied to school contexts, diversity is fostered as strength rather than something to be minimized, and new information should be presented in relation to what students already know. This is an important issue relevant to the education of Vietnamese American students who require pedagogy that both recognizes and builds upon their diverse backgrounds and unique experiences.

According to Vygotsky (1978), learning occurs in social contexts. Social interaction is thus an essential mechanism whereby information is mediated, or structured and restructured, in the forms of teacher-student and student-student dialogues to involve students as full participants rather than passive observers in the academic milieu. Vygotsky (1978) defined the zone of proximal development as the distance between the actual developmental level of a learner, which is determined by problem-solving on his/her own, and the potential developmental level, which is determined by problem-solving in cooperation with an expert or a more capable peer (Vygotsky, 1978). Research shows that the zone of proximal development has more direct significance for the dynamics of mental development and school achievement than does the present level of a child's development. In other words, children must have some means of crossing from what they currently know to what they do not know. Current educational practices are mostly derived from the assessment of *present* levels of development of children. Based on these assessments, attempts are made to enhance the development of the less advantaged (immigrant) students and to confirm their *present* (low) levels of development by reducing intervention to below the level of social and cultural change (Sutton, 1981).

Traditional Teaching

Traditional methods in reading instruction pay little attention to social interaction between students and teachers, they do not foster critical reading skills. Traditional methods assume reading comprehension through reading out loud and answering factual questions; student's prior knowledge in relation to the cultural context reflected in the reading text is not taken into consideration. In addition, traditional practices do not teach students reading comprehension strategies, such as the vital cognitive strategies of identifying the main idea, reflecting on information identified as important, noting when there has been a breakdown in comprehension and restoring meaning, and hypothesizing what the author will discuss next (Slavin, Karweit, & Madden, 1989). Nor do they encourage meaningful and content-based social interaction among students.

Many Vietnamese American children currently enrolled in American schools came from simple agrarian and traditional cultural backgrounds; even those from urban areas were minimally exposed to "modern" learning environments, according to American standards. These children have been thrust into a rapidly changing technological society in which they have to cope with unfamiliar and highly complex requirements. These children are thus suddenly submerged in a bewildering situation in which they are required to learn to change and adapt quickly.

To address a situation similar to that experienced by Vietnamese Americans, Feuerstein (1977, 1980), using his experiences with Israeli refugees, developed the learning paradigm called *Mediated Learning Experience* (MLE) based on the theory of Cognitive Structural Modifiability. Feuerstein's learning paradigm is postulated on the belief that learning does not take place only through direct exposure to stimuli but also through another modality, the Mediated Learning Experience (Feuerstein, 1977). This paradigm was developed as a result of an observation that some students are able to take advantage of and benefit from encounters with new experiences, while others manifest little capacity to do so. Feuerstein (1977) and Jensen, Feuerstein, Rand, Kaniel, and Tzuriel (1988) believe that the difference in improvement between these two groups after additional instruction is due to a difference in their cognitive development, which is significantly affected by different environmental conditions. This variance becomes obvious when the student is confronted with novelty or change. Students' capacities to benefit directly from new experiences depend on whether they have previously had adequately mediated learning experiences.

The Mediated Learning Experience is a modality of learning where the learner is not directly exposed to sources of stimuli. The mediator (teacher or expert) selects stimuli from the environment, transforms them accord-

ing to goals and objectives. The mediator selects responses produced by the learner, shapes them and transforms them to help the learner develop appropriate responses. The mediation process establishes within the learner the cognitive functions, mental operations, learning sets and need systems required for the learner's development of higher levels of cognitive modifiability.

Subsequently, the learner is enabled to interact effectively with the environment without mediation and to adapt to the need to change. In other words, this initial mediation provides a scaffold and support for learning. This learning paradigm is recommended for teaching culturally and linguistically different students because the process of mediation allows them eventually to "benefit from Direct Exposure (Stimulus-Organism-Response) to both formal and informal learning opportunities" (Jensen, et al., 1988, p. 66). Initial mediation of learning with the students will result in their ultimately developing into independent learners.

The mediated learning experience paradigm discussed above seems applicable to Vietnamese American students for whom the process of adaptation and academic success cannot be ensured simply by placing them in American schools without some specific support and targeted interventions. Vietnamese American students entering U.S. schools for the first time may have had adequately mediated learning experiences in their home culture. However, the contrast between their previous circumstances (or home culture) and the new academic environment is so great that these students require initial scaffolding and support (or initial mediation of learning) in order to successfully make the transition, and be prepared to benefit from instruction within an American academic environment. Academic success in American schools depends highly on reading comprehension of texts. Therefore, it is crucial to equip these Vietnamese students with strategies that they need in order to develop reading comprehension skills and the metacognitive abilities to self-monitor reading comprehension processes.

Reciprocal Teaching

Reciprocal Teaching was developed by Palincsar and Brown (1984) and has been validated by much research and development. Reciprocal Teaching can be defined as an instructional procedure designed to enhance students' comprehension of text. It is characterized as a dialogue between a teacher and students and between students and students. The structure of the dialogue is usually based on the four strategies: *Questioning, summarizing, clarifying,* and *predicting.* The teacher and students take turns assuming the role of dialogue leader. The purpose of this process is to facilitate a

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joint effort between a teacher and students, as well as among students in constructing meaning from the text, by the use of the four comprehension strategies mentioned above.

Reciprocal Teaching is based on a conception of reading that emphasizes the following aspects of instruction: (1) understanding the factors that interact and influence one's comprehension of text; (2) applying the strategies in meaningful, interactive, social and holistic contexts (Klingner & Vaughn, 1996), not in isolation using artificial tasks; and (3) using strategies flexibly as opportunities arise.

In addition, Reciprocal Teaching has two features that are important to all learners, but they are particularly critical to Vietnamese American students who try to become efficacious in a new environment: (1) Reciprocal Teaching is designed to foster metacognition—for the learner to find an answer to "do I know that I have the skill?" and (2) It provides students a supportive peer group setting in which to observe and practice developing skills (Palincsar & Brown, 1984)—for the learner to find an answer to "do I trust the environment?"

Furthermore, Reciprocal Teaching is an example of *socially mediated instruction.* Socially mediated instruction is also referred to as "scaffolded instruction" which emphasizes the role of guided learning in social contexts as a key to developmental change (Vygotsky, 1978). The idea originated from concerns that traditional reading instructional methods emphasizes paper and pencil exercises such as underlining a main idea (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). The development of Reciprocal Teaching was based on the examinations of what most "good readers" do and the strategies they use. Reciprocal Teaching specifically addresses the development of strategies for gaining knowledge from text while simultaneously monitoring levels of understanding. These are typical strategies that most critical readers normally have acquired. In addition, Reciprocal Teaching is a method to teach meta-cognitive skills of reading, which are strategies that enable students to:

1. Clarify the purposes of reading.
2. Make use of relevant background knowledge.
3. Allocate attention to focus on major content at the expense of trivia.
4. Critically evaluate content for internal consistency and comparability with prior knowledge and common sense.
5. Monitor to ensure that comprehension is occurring.
6. Draw and test inferences (Palincsar & David, 1991, p. 123).

Relevance of Reciprocal Teaching for Vietnamese American Students

In this study Reciprocal Teaching was used as an approach for teaching Vietnamese immigrant children because it incorporates the characteristics

and features of Mediated Learning Experience. It also includes student participation and the supportive group context as integral parts of the method. Reciprocal Teaching addresses the above mentioned cognitive strategies that are vital for reading comprehension and reading comprehension monitoring (Slavin, et al., 1989), which are especially relevant to Vietnamese American children for several reasons. First, many of these children come from a rigid familial system and an educational background that place heavy emphasis on rote learning. In contrast, the Reciprocal Teaching procedure helps students become aware of the nature of different strategies and when to apply them. Rules and steps are clearly delineated, and the procedure enables the transfer of responsibility for learning to the students. The procedure is a regular component of classroom activity and can be repeated as often as the students' needs dictate.

Second, due to cultural norms, Vietnamese American (and other Asian American) students are likely to adopt a passive or reticent role in class discussions. Enabling them to participate more fully in class discussions is a matter of teaching the necessary skills (Dao, 1991). A feature of the Reciprocal Teaching procedure that is particularly salient for Vietnamese American students is the provision of initial guidance and teacher modeling of strategies that will help students become independent and learn to even lead discussions. Third, strategies are modeled in appropriate academic contexts, not as isolated or separate skill exercises. Reciprocal Teaching requires the teacher to "think aloud" and to demonstrate how to use background knowledge to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar concepts in a variety of curricular areas. Fourth, Reciprocal Teaching addresses the issue of how to help Vietnamese immigrant students learn to generate problem-solving strategies for novel academic tasks, which they may transfer to other learning tasks as suggested by Campione (1989).

Implementation of Reciprocal Teaching

At the beginning of a reading passage, students are encouraged to generate predictions based upon the title (and/or pictures) about the content of the text. The discussion leader is selected. A paragraph is selected; then everyone is asked to read it (silently).

Once everyone has finished reading the paragraph, in order to begin the dialogue concerning the content of the paragraph, the leader raises a question about the most important information in the paragraph just as a teacher would. Students in the group are then called upon to answer the question and to suggest additional questions for the group to answer.

Next, the leader summarizes the most important information in the text, and asks the group how the summary might be improved. If appropriate, the leader elicits from the group any words or ideas that need to be clarified. If there is a need for clarification, the leader models the strategies

she or he uses to make sense of the text or figure out the meaning of a word; she or he also elicits students' suggestions or participation in jointly resolving the confusion. Finally, the leader requests the group to generate predictions for the next paragraph. Once this procedure is completed, a new discussion leader is selected and the same procedure is repeated.

Role of the Teacher in Reciprocal Teaching

During the initial days of intervention, the teacher begins each session by reviewing the four strategies and the purpose for learning to use them. At the beginning of each session, the teacher assumes the role of discussion leader for several paragraphs in order to teach and model the use of the strategies. For example, the teacher would say: "An interesting *question* about this part of the reading is..." Then the teacher elicits responses to this question from the students. If necessary, the teacher suggests to the students to refer to the text in order to find the answer, then encourages students to add their questions.

Next, the teacher models the second strategy by saying, for example, "by thinking about the topic, I would *summarize* the most important information in this paragraph in the following way..." The teacher then encourages the students to finish the summary.

For the third strategy, the teacher models by saying, if necessary, "when I read this part, I thought this word (or this idea) needed to be *clarified*..." The teacher describes and models the kinds of strategies she or he uses to make sense of the portion of the text that needs to be clarified (e.g., I reread, or reread the previous sentence, and I figured out that "it" must refer to _____.).

Finally, the teacher shows how she or he makes a prediction by saying, for example, "Based on what we have read so far, I would *predict* that the author will discuss ... in the next section."

During the intervention, the teacher models the use of strategies by "thinking aloud" to make the thinking process explicit to the students; for example, the teacher thinks aloud to demonstrate how to use background knowledge to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar concept. The teacher then gradually transfers the responsibility for using the strategies and leading the dialogues to the students. The teacher first calls upon students who demonstrate readiness to take turns leading the discussion, then calls upon those who may have more difficulty. This gives those children who may need more support additional opportunities to observe others practice using the strategies before it is their turn to lead the discussion.

When a student starts to lead the discussion for the first time, the teacher provides support and gives prompts to help the student initially; other students in the group are also urged to provide help. The number of prompts provided by the teacher diminishes as the student becomes more

and more competent in applying the strategies and conducting the dialogues (Palincsar & David, 1991).

RESEARCH METHOD

The study used a Randomized Pretest-Posttest Control Group design (Campbell & Stanley, 1963; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990) to examine the effectiveness of the Reciprocal Teaching procedure for improving the reading comprehension abilities of Vietnamese immigrant children after 20 days of instruction. The independent variable in this study was the Reciprocal Teaching Procedure. The dependent variable was the reading comprehension level as measured by the Nelson Reading Test (1962) at pre- and posttests. A pilot study was conducted to standardize the intervention and testing procedures and to confirm the logistics of the procedures in the experiment. Reading passages were selected from the 4th, 5th and 6th grade textbooks used in the school district reading program. This reading program from which the reading passages were drawn was part of the state-approved curriculum and was in accordance with the California State Framework.

Participants and Context

The school district where the study was conducted was chosen for the following reasons: It is among the districts in California as well as in the nation most impacted by the influx of Southeast Asian families. Over the past 10 years, this district has fluctuated from first to third in rank in terms of the number of Southeast Asian students in the nation. The school district is located in a low cost housing area of town and the majority of the enrolled students came from families of low socioeconomic status.

The sample for this study was drawn from 2 schools: One had the largest enrollment of Vietnamese American pupils in the school district with about 30% of the student population being Vietnamese American. The other school had a relatively high percentage of Vietnamese American students in comparison to other schools in the district, which had more non-Vietnamese student enrollment (i.e., pupils whose origins were from other Southeast Asian countries).

The *Vietnamese American children* in this study refer to children of recent Vietnamese immigrant families (parents who have been in the country for five years or less, who are native Vietnamese speakers) who were enrolled in public schools in an urban northern California school district. The selection of participants was based on their performance on the reading

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comprehension part of the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). Vietnamese American children who scored at the 50th percentile rank or below were included in the current study. The sample initially consisted of 59 fluent English proficient Vietnamese American 4th, 5th, and 6th graders. However, upon verification of eligibility for the free school lunch program, the sample was narrowed down to 56 participants ($N = 56$). Only children eligible for participation in the free school lunch program were selected, to ensure homogeneity of socioeconomic status. After attrition, the final sample size was reduced to 50 participants ($N = 50$) for data analysis. There were 18 fourth graders, 28 fifth graders and 4 sixth graders. The participants' ages ranged from 9 to 12 with 28 males and 22 females. Thus, the age and gender differences of the students were controlled not to affect the results of the study. The participants were all redesignated as Fluent English Proficient students according to the Home Language Survey that confirmed each student's primary language background, and were all from intact families. As indicated earlier, the socioeconomic background of the children was also controlled to preclude participants' socioeconomic background differences in the outcome of the experiment. All the students were placed in regular classrooms with other children from diverse cultural backgrounds (i.e., Anglo European, Hispanic, African American and other Asian American), and were taught by "regular" monolingual Anglo European teachers. All participants followed the same reading program designated by the district for all the schools.

The initial sample of 56 participants were *randomly* assigned to experimental and control groups according to the procedure delineated by Marascuilo and Serlin (1988). After attrition, the total number of the subjects was reduced to 50, with 29 participants in the experimental and 21 in the control groups. The experimental group was divided into four reading groups each consisting of 6 to 8 students. The control group was divided into 3 reading groups of 6 to 8 students.

In order to ensure that both groups were equivalent in reading comprehension performance, pretest results were examined. No significant differences were found between the two groups. Table 1 provides pretest profile information which includes the total numbers of participants in the experimental and control groups, the number of males and females, the number of participants in each grade—4th, 5th, or 6th—the mean ages of the participants, and the mean percentile ranks in reading comprehension on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS).

The mean scores of the CTBS for both groups fell within one standard deviation of the overall CTBS mean score. Coupled with the random sampling strategy using the table of random numbers, the difference between the control and experimental CTBS mean scores was assumed to be a function of the sample and not problematic for the purpose of the current

study. Additionally, the similarity of the Nelson Reading Test ratings (mean difference = .19 points) suggested a strong similarity between the control and experimental groups.

Table 1. Pretest Profile of Vietnamese-American Pupils in the Reciprocal Teaching Study

	Total (N = 50)	*Experimental Group (N = 29)*	*Control Group (N = 21)*
Female		16	6
Male		13	15
4th Graders		9	9
5th Graders		20	8
6th Graders		0	4
Age Mean		10.31	10.52
Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills Reading Comprehension Mean Percentile Rank		28	37

Teaching Procedures

A credentialed teacher was employed as the sole person to administer the pretests and posttests, to provide the Reciprocal Teaching instruction to the experimental group, and to provide the regular reading program to the control group. The Nelson Reading Test pretest was administered to all 50 participants during the second session in their subgroups of 6 to 8. During the final session, all 50 participants were given the Nelson Reading Test posttest in their subgroups.

The experimental groups. Beginning with the third session, the four experimental subgroups received Reciprocal Teaching instruction utilizing the school's current reading materials. Each subgroup worked with the teacher to read and discuss a passage. During the earliest days of the intervention, the teacher assigned a passage to be read, and indicated that it was her turn to be the teacher or dialogue leader. The teacher and the students read silently. After reading the text, the teacher modeled comprehension-monitoring strategies by asking a question on the main idea, summarizing the content, discussing, clarifying any difficulties, and finally making a prediction about future content.

Over the course of several days, students were then encouraged to participate at whatever level they could with teacher support and to gradually assume the role of dialogue leader. These activities were embedded in as

natural a dialogue as possible, with the teacher and students giving feedback and support to each other.

Throughout the intervention, students were explicitly told that these activities were general strategies to help them understand better as they read, and that they should, when they read silently, try to do as the teacher or student dialogue leader modeled. For example, the teacher pointed out that being able to say in their own words what they had just read and being able to guess what questions would be on a test, were good ways to find out whether they had understood a passage.

The intervention was carried out for 30 minutes per session over 20 consecutive days of instruction. This time frame was chosen because studies conducted by Palincsar and Brown (1984) on the Reciprocal Teaching method indicated that a treatment effect could be observed after 12 days of treatment, with some improvement in comprehension continuing to occur through approximately 15 sessions.

The control group. To control for novelty effect, group size, and independence of the person who delivered the intervention, the control group received 30 minutes of the school's regular reading instruction per session for 20 consecutive sessions. The same teacher who delivered the treatment to the experimental group provided to the control group the traditional reading instructional routines currently used in the schools of the research site.

Data Analysis

Tests of significance were performed to see if the data supported the hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 1.** Data analysis shows that (a) students in the experimental group had significantly more improvement in reading comprehension than the control group over the period of 20 days of instruction; (b) there was a positive relationship between reading comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring strategies and reading comprehension for Vietnamese American students.

Over the duration of one and a half months, between initial and final testing, a greater difference emerged between the two groups on the variable of reading comprehension. The experimental group made more progress in reading comprehension from initial to final testing than the control group.

Table 2 provides the pretest and posttest Nelson reading comprehension measures of the experimental and control groups. The table indicates an increase of 8.21 points between the pretest and posttests in reading comprehension of the experimental group, and an increase of 0.71 points

between the pretest and posttests in reading comprehension of the control group. Thus, there was a 7.49 point mean difference between the two groups in terms of improvement between initial and final tests. This difference can be safely attributed to the treatment provided to the experimental group.

Moreover, Table 2 presents the findings on the improvement in reading comprehension of the experimental group compared to the control group on the posttest. It shows the mean raw scores of 35.059 for the experimental group, with conversions to percentile rank and grade equivalent. The table shows the mean raw scores of 27.762 for the control group.

Table 2. Pretest and Posttest Results of Nelson Reading Comprehension Measures

N = 50	*Experimental Group (N = 29)*			*Control Group (N = 21)*			*Mean Difference between Control and Experimental Groups*	
	Pretest	*Posttest*	*Mean Difference*	*Pretest*	*Posttest*	*Mean Difference*	*Pretest*	*Posttest*
Mean Raw Scores	26.862	35.069	8.21	27.048	27.762	.71	.19	7.31
Mean Percentile Rank	47.828	71.138	23.31	53.810	46.810	7.00	5.98	24.33
Mean Grade Equivalent	3.959	6.538	2.58	3.957	5.319	1.36	0	1.22

The *t*-tests confirmed a statistically significant difference between the two groups. The data show that the reading comprehension levels of the pupils who were taught with the Reciprocal Teaching method had increased significantly more than the pupils in the control group who received the traditional reading instruction (t (48) = + 5.25, $p < .05$, two tailed).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Context explicit teaching of strategies. The Reciprocal Teaching procedure, a method that explicitly teaches children strategies to comprehend texts, affected the reading performance levels of the Vietnamese American pupils significantly more than the traditional reading method utilized in the control group. The results of the study demonstrated the effectiveness of a reading instructional method among Vietnamese American students whose parents were refugees, most of whom were not fluent in English.

If this instructional procedure was effective among a group of children whose families were from limited English proficient and low socioeconomic backgrounds, it means that the issue of improving literacy skills among these students is a matter of using appropriate instructional methods; it also means that concrete strategies need to be taught instead of assuming that the children will somehow "pick up" the skills.

Although this study only examined children's reading behavior, it would be fairly safe to say that the impact could be generated across all curricular areas because Reciprocal Teaching addresses teaching of reading strategies in context across all content areas and that once children acquire a particular learning strategy, they are apt to transfer it to other learning tasks.

Observing student progress. The findings indicate that there were variations in the degree of improvement, as well as the pace at which children improved their reading behavior among the participants in the experimental group. Based on this researcher's observations, there were children who did not readily respond to the intervention, while the researcher saw a consistent pattern of the children's changing behavior and an increase in participation and progress toward taking leadership roles in the experimental group. The following short anecdote illustrates significant individual differences in the reading behavior change of the children.

At the beginning of the study, all of the children sat very quietly, were very reluctant to answer questions, did not want to discuss and hardly ever raised their hands. They all said: "I will never lead the discussion group, I can never play the teacher's role!"

However, as the teacher modeled the strategies and made them more and more explicit, the boys responded first and wanted to practice leading the dialogues. Gradually, the children in the group appeared to realize that the one who volunteered first did not know initially how to lead. However, as he received prompts and guidance from the teacher, or sometimes from a friend, he gradually became more successful at initiating questions and leading the dialogue. As a consequence, more and more children started to raise their hands; they wanted to add a point to the summary that was stated, to ask a question or remind the leader about a strategy. The girls answered the questions, then gradually began to contribute and remind the leader what needed to be done next. Then, several girls who appeared to be the most shy in the group continuously raised their hands, insisted on having an opportunity to answer the questions and give feedback, and later on, initiated the questions and expressed their wishes to be the leaders of the discussion group.

There was a clear progression of interaction among the children in terms of active involvement in the discussion related to the reading passages. There was a progression from children's simple factual questions to

critical comprehension questions. Finally, toward the end of the study, most of the children volunteered to take charge of the reading groups.

Developing student competence and feelings of success. In the experimental group, it was evident that children exhibited active concept formation, higher self-concept, and signs of becoming competent and dynamic group leaders. In addition, children appeared to realize that the teacher, along with them, was going through the process of figuring out what the reading passages meant. This joint activity seemed to make the children feel comfortable (not threatened by the "authority" figure) and at the same time helped them acquire the comprehension strategies in the context of what they were reading. This joint activity of constructing meaning seemed to make the children feel good about themselves because each one contributed to a successful performance as shown in such a remark as "Finally, we've got it!"

Early identification of individual learning needs. The interactive process helped the teacher realize immediately when a child was having difficulty; she could thus respond to and help the child. It also helped the children monitor their own reading comprehension.

However, there were also about five children who seemed to need a lot of encouragement and much more assistance than the others. For example, there was one girl who was hardly ever "with" the group; the teacher had difficulty in getting her attention and in bringing her to focus. This raised several questions: (1) Were there children who were non-English proficient? (2) Were there children who needed more time and more instructional guidance in order to acquire the reading comprehension strategies (i.e., did they have different learning rates)? (3) Were there children who might have learning problems which could hinder or prevent their acquisition of strategies and skills? It was very likely that some children needed further diagnosis if they continued not to respond to the treatment.

Thus, this method of instruction allowed diagnostic observation of different learning rates and facilitated teacher response to individual learning needs of students. This approach facilitated the *early* identification of students who might really need further diagnosis and special attention.

Developing critical reading skills. Furthermore, from the outset, children in both the experimental and control groups did not show any special interest in the reading materials. Later on, as a result of the joint exploration into deeper meaning of the text, several children in the experimental group indicated that they were interested in reading more about the story. They appeared intrigued by the implicit connotations of certain events in the story and started to ask critical questions. This shows the development of critical reading skills.

Learning how to participate. The children were receiving concrete assistance and support from the teacher while their peers contributed to the positive dynamic changes in the group. The children appeared to become more confident and happy in taking their work seriously. They seemed to feel that they were getting an adequate help in becoming more and more competent.

It was clear that as children became more competent, they participated more and requested to have their turns to be leaders. This was a critical point. It confirmed for this researcher that Vietnamese American, and in general, Asian American children (often perceived as passive and nonparticipatory), needed to be taught how to lead a discussion or dialogue in the context of American classrooms.

Importance of social interaction. The findings point to the importance of students' learning how to actively participate in constructing meaning, interacting with texts in different contexts. The findings imply that the currently used approach of segmenting the content to be learned into parts is not effective. The traditional approach pays little attention to the social interactions among students and teachers in the learning process where they bring in and rely on their previous experiences and knowledge in order to make sense of the text—a particular aspect of teaching and learning emphasized in the experimental group. Paper and pencil exercises such as underlining an explicit main idea in traditional reading sessions, observed in the control group, apparently do not foster critical reading skills. Reciprocal Teaching allows the teacher to tap into Vietnamese American children's strengths, and acknowledge that their knowledge is acquired from different cultural context.

A matter of acculturation. The findings of this study point to a socialization issue that has been overlooked for Vietnamese American students. Students need to be provided with explanations about American cultural background information in order to connect with text content and understand its deep meaning. Teaching and learning how to talk in a new setting, that is, the context of an academic lesson in American classrooms where the comprehension of academic texts in English may require prior experience or knowledge that is socioculturally specific. Vietnamese American students may not have acquired this knowledge. Thus, it may not always be true that they have not developed inferential skills—they probably have, but within a different sociocultural context (refer to Dao, 1999). Since it is likely that they do not have the background knowledge related to aspects of American culture reflected in the reading passages, they cannot, therefore, make culturally appropriate inferences in the context of American academic text. For example, if "cereal" is mentioned in a reading passage, it usually implies "breakfast" (in an American cultural context). However, if the student does not know that cereal is an American breakfast food, then

she or he cannot make the appropriate inference. Acculturation thus is an aspect of reading comprehension that has been overlooked in literacy development. In other words, finding out whether students have the background knowledge to connect with the content in the reading passage is a critical aspect of reading comprehension. It allows the teacher and/or student to identify the reason for the breakdown in comprehension. If it is due to the fact that the student does not have the prior knowledge of certain American sociocultural norms necessary to make appropriate inferences and interpret the text's deep meaning in the reading passage, improving reading comprehension may be simply a matter of teaching students the specific background information that they need to know.

CONCLUSION

The focus on the acquisition of critical reading skills through explicit modeling and teaching of comprehension-fostering and comprehension-monitoring strategies has wide implications for helping Vietnamese American students to achieve and maintain academic competence and improve academic performance. Once they had the opportunity to be taught reading comprehension strategies in a systematic way, Vietnamese American students demonstrated that they could perform and that they had the potential for making progress. Only when students have been equipped with such skills can we say that they have access to the curriculum. If educators are to "empower" students during adaptation from one environment to another, the key point is not to perceive their differences as barriers to literacy acquisition nor to attempt to remove such differences, but to *appropriately* support them toward acquiring relevant skills within the new context. Otherwise, there exists the danger that these students might be misdiagnosed as learning disabled, and possibly misplaced into unsuitable special education programs.

This research helped to unearth an underlying issue in literacy development among students from different cultural backgrounds which has been neglected: The importance of teaching appropriate cultural or contextual background information in order to foster reading comprehension.

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CHAPTER 3

EXPLORING PACIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND CLASSROOM LEARNING IN MICRONESIA:

THE PROMISE OF "CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS"

Sharon Nelson-Barber

So the story goes … late one night a ketch meandered toward the outskirts of a vast lagoon in the chain of slender islands and atolls that make up the Marshall Islands. To assist their travel among neighbor islands between the north Pacific Ocean and the Philippine Sea, the U.S. mainland crew had welcomed aboard a Marshallese, known for his skill as a navigator. Now returning after several days, the Marshallese was asleep on the foredeck, content to have set the best course to avoid the dangerous reefs jutting outside the land areas. The quiet night ended when suddenly the Marshallese jolted from slumber, ran to the captain's deck and yanked the steering wheel, veering the boat off course. Stunned crew members at first cursed the local. But as they looked back to their former position their eyes bulged with the reflection of a reef—one into which they surely would have slammed had they stayed on course. The now jubilant Americans smothered the Marshallese demanding to know how he knew. The sea was calm! He was asleep!!! "You can feel it," the Marshallese answered matter of factly. "We were coming to the reef." As it turned out, someone had inadvertently set a metal coffee cup next to the compass.[1]

INTRODUCTION

It is knowledge of this kind that has contributed substantially to the survival and maintenance of Republic of Marshall Islands inhabitants, as well as other cultural groups indigenous to Micronesia. The string of islands and atolls north of New Guinea and east of the Philippines that make up Micronesia span an area about the size of the mainland United States. In addition to the Marshalls, Micronesia includes the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Guam, and the Republic of Palau. These island nations have weathered occupation by the Spanish, the Germans, the Japanese, and, during and after World War II, the United States. That Micronesian languages and cultures remain vibrant in the twenty-first century attests to their collective self-determination. After the war, the nations became districts, or entities, of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which accorded them a special relationship with the U.S. government. One result was the introduction of an American educational system. Though the entities now have a range of political affiliations with the U.S. government (e.g., freely associated states, a commonwealth, a trust territory seeking statehood), American schooling remains in place.

Like American schools in other indigenous communities, issues of language, culture, home, and school differences arise prominently at many levels. However, there is an important distinction between the teachers in Micronesian schools and those in mainland indigenous communities. Micronesian settings draw most of their teachers from the same communities as their students. They are knowledgeable about local language and have an expressed interest in maintaining local culture. Teachers who serve American Indian and Alaska Native students are more likely to live outside their students' communities and lack adequate preparation for understanding and handling cultural differences. This is not to suggest that mainland teachers are less committed or well intentioned. However, what has surfaced in the literature is the notion that many excellent teachers, who have been socialized into the same culture as their students, teach in ways that differ from and sometimes contradict what is deemed "good" and "effective" in mainstream education. They often rely on their own cultural knowledge and intuitions rather than what they learned in formal teacher preparation (cf. Au & Kawakami, 1994; Delpit, 1995; Foster, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lipka, 1998; Nelson-Barber, 1999; Swisher & Deyhle, 1992; Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield & Quiroz, 2001). This literature suggests that having special skills to tailor content, use local vernacular, or use cultural knowledge to build relationships with students can be critical to teaching success across cultures.

With respect to some of the skills and abilities of indigenous students, we know that many follow a lifestyle that has natural connections to mathematics and science. For example, by necessity, inhabitants of Micronesian island nations have developed highly specialized abilities to recognize and read tide patterns, star configurations, moon phases, cloud patterns, and the like for weather prediction, navigational, and subsistence purposes. Such expertise acquired over lifetimes and passed on through generations can mean the difference between safety and peril, life and death. This knowledge is highly mathematical and scientific. However, the ways in which Micronesians have come to talk about these phenomena are often not recognized as "mathematical" or "scientific" by outsiders to these communities. These skills and abilities have evolved within particular cultural contexts that directly link to the islanders' experience, local values, and traditions, but perhaps more important, to their culturally determined preferences for thinking and interacting. The fact that this kind of knowledge goes unrecognized by outsiders raise important issues when the outsiders are teachers.

Indeed, the education community has failed to capitalize on opportunities for indigenous students to link their own knowledge and experience with content in mathematics and science classrooms. Recent work in a range of indigenous communities on the mainland and in Alaska attests to the challenges and offers some solutions (cf. Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative, 2001; Lipka, 1994, 1998; Navajo Nation Rural Systemic Initiative, 2001; Tribal College Rural Systemic Initiative, 2001; Trumbull, Nelson-Barber, & Mitchell, forthcoming; UCAN Rural Systemic Initiative). However, few studies explore the ways in which forms of mathematics or science embedded in cultural activities, or *ethnomathematics* and *ethnoscience*, reflect high standards of content and performance and promote the habits of mind required in American schools.

Some such work in the Pacific region, and in Micronesia in particular, is beginning to reach the public domain. Pacific educators now suggest that their schooling contexts offer unique insights into the ways in which they draw on students' well-developed ways of knowing, learning and problem solving (cf. Borja, 1996; Emangitil & Sartilug, 1996; Emesiochl & Fuller, 1995; Gallen, James, Weirlangt, & Peler, 1997; Houmwarek & Esu, 1995; Malina-Wright, 1995; Melaitau & Edwards, 1998; Namelo, Erra, & Namelo, 1999; Pacific Mathematics Leadership Team, 1995; Pacific Science Leadership Team, 1995; Peter & Siver, 1998; Saunder, 1996). This paper discusses some of the ways in which the Micronesian educators with whom we work are beginning to make mathematics and science curricula more meaningful and accessible to students.

CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Our research group began collaborating with indigenous teachers from the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of Palau, the Republic of Marshall Islands, and Pohnpei and Yap States (FSM), as part of a larger program of professional development for elementary level teachers. Local education leaders nominated a subset from this group to participate in interviews and to open their classrooms for observation. In addition to identifying teachers who spoke their local language and came from the communities in which they taught, we asked that they be experienced and considered "cultural experts," with a history of drawing on students' cultural knowledge in their science and mathematics classes. The data show that these individuals had an ability to talk about and conceptualize their efforts in ways that were different from teachers who came from outside the culture. They talked more explicitly both about cultural knowledge and how they draw upon that knowledge to teach as an ongoing part of their daily lives and instruction. They also shared understandings about what they considered to be important cultural mathematics and science knowledge (e.g., tide patterns, weather prediction, celestial navigation, fishing techniques, food preparation, distribution of food across the community).

We wanted very much to understand the concepts that guided their instructional choices (including classroom organization and management); the principles they employed to make decisions about how to teach mathematics and science; how they made their own intuitive knowledge of cultural content, values, and processes explicit; and how they drew from students' own culture-based mathematics and science knowledge directly to enhance student learning. However, as we visited different entities, we understood immediately that, rather than jumping into interpreting the data, we needed to spend a great deal of time seeking input from our Micronesian colleagues, observing, meeting people, and having the various communities feel comfortable with our presence. Though some of us are indigenous, none of us are native to the Pacific region. So, in fact, we were all outsiders to these cultures and early on found that we had much to learn.

In some contexts, awareness of the social status of those around you determined how people physically oriented themselves in a space. In other contexts, it was not uncommon for more than one person to speak at a time—a behavior that in western cultures might be confused with competing for the floor at best and, at worst, rudeness. In yet another context, a listener who offered immediate verbal response to a speaker's question was believed to lack thoughtfulness. Beyond questions of mathematics and science instruction, it was essential, at least, to begin to learn some of the norms of communication in order to fully make sense of interactions in local classrooms. Not surprisingly, according to our colleagues, these were

exactly the kinds of misunderstandings that posed problems for outside teachers. In fact, we began to hear several repeated themes addressing the mismatch between the communicative norms and practices of the school and the communicative norms and practices of the local communities.

At the same time, a member of the Board of Education in one of the entities stressed that for a number of reasons it was often difficult to be sensitive to, what he termed "cultural considerations," not only for outside teachers, but for local ones as well:

- Pacific educators value the cultural knowledge of their communities but are challenged to incorporate these within a mainstream educational framework.
- Having agreed to a constructivist/standards-based approach, which should allow for student-centered instruction, Pacific teachers still experience pressure to conform to dominant culture concepts of achievement.
- The degree to which teachers use culture-based knowledge and ways of learning to teach mathematics and science is extremely variable, though all teachers interviewed believe there are benefits to such an approach.
- In schools where there are few or no indigenous teachers, connections to children's culture tend to be superficial (i.e., through food, festivals, beadwork, and singing treated as artifacts).
- A potential source of interference in cultural continuity is parental belief that children should learn English above all—even to the exclusion of their home language. As a consequence, language—a major source of cultural transmission—is removed.

One of the most serious issues, echoed in these themes, has to do with the nearly wholesale imposition of a "western" model of education upon a group of indigenous cultures that had quite different traditions for educating youth. The entities we visited are heavily committed to a "western" style education because they are largely committed to educating their students to be eligible for colleges in the United States. The "western" approach can be characterized as primarily verbal, competitive, generally focused on decontextualized knowledge, skills, and learning, and promoting of critical thinking (i.e., challenging authority). Traditionally, indigenous approaches have been less verbal and more oriented toward observation and direct performance in meaningful activities and therefore more contextualized, cooperative, and promoting of respect for elders (i.e., not challenging authority). Thus, to introduce culture-based instruction entails not only identifying appropriate content but recognizing and using strategies that resonate with indigenous ways of learning.

For example, tribal peoples have tended to refrain from abstracting broad generalizations from experience and then using them to explain new experiences or make predictions. Instead, they have understood new information and experience in terms of the full tapestry of continuous experience and contextualized knowledge (cf. Deloria, 1992; Kawagley, 1995; Lipka, 1998; Pomeroy, 1988). Rather than matching generalizations with new phenomena, indigenous people match their more specific body of information with the immediate event or experience. In this way, they do not risk oversimplifying or reducing the meaning of a complex experience or understanding. This is apparent in Gladwin's (1970) account of navigation and logic on Puluwat Atoll (Chuuk State, FSM), which he characterizes not as a "technology," but rather as an example of "purposeful thinking in another culture." (p. 214)

Given such broad differences, the pressures to conform to a western model and western expectations were very much in the minds of the interviewed teachers. One reported, "The school system is set up in a competitive way, something that violates the culture. ... Here cooperation is the norm; you will get shunned if you don't cooperate." Another teacher reveals that she currently uses a program common in classrooms on the U.S. mainland, called *Know Your Body*, as the core of her science instruction. Whereas, in the past, "I did teach students about CNMI (the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), about historical preservation and artifacts. I used to take the kids out on field trips to the Banzai Cliffs and to study ecosystems."

This is of great concern in some Micronesian communities where there is clear disconnection between local needs and values and future goals pushed by "western" education. In the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, for example, many youngsters envision themselves in jobs that have nothing to do with their local environment—jobs they have gleaned from the mainstream media such as models or newscasters—while jobs related to the local economy or the environment that need to be filled go begging at home. Similarly, many in the Republic of Palau are making decisions about how many resort hotels to build: some seeing such expansion as an opportunity to build the economy, others seeing it as an environmental threat that will bring with it other changes contradictory to the Palauan way of life.

Yet, even when educators speak of the need for "cultural considerations" in education, they may not be ready to confront what it actually would take to make classroom instruction culturally considerate. There are two related obstacles to such inclusive instruction:

1. Even though teachers have tacit knowledge of their own culture-based ways of knowing, they may automatically disregard this

knowledge in favor of "western" styles of teaching they have either observed or been taught, and

2. Without making this tacit knowledge explicit to themselves, they may not be able to use it to selective advantage or to share it with non-indigenous colleagues.

SNAPSHOTS OF CULTURE-BASED TEACHING

Despite these frustrations, many Micronesian teachers do engage in culture-based instruction. We believed that the exploratory work of asking teachers to reflect on their own skills and abilities and to envision how complex variables play out in real-life schools and classrooms could provide a basis for future, more extensive examination of the principles that guide their teaching successes. The elementary teachers that we interviewed called upon experiences such as fishing, navigation, and agriculture to introduce children to numerous mathematical and scientific concepts outside of the classroom. At the time, it happened that the teachers also were looking into the use of high technology as a way to support improved teaching and learning. We decided to capitalize on this opportunity by asking them to think about familiar lessons they used to connect local knowledge to school mathematics or science and then to produce a "snapshot" of how they might incorporate the new technology in their lessons. Examples of how they conceptualized integrating Web-based technology are summarized below.

Example 1

A teacher from Saipan (CNMI) uses thematic units based on Chamorro and Carolinian traditional cultures (including their arts, technologies, economic practices) to teach language arts, social studies, mathematics, and science.

1. Web site relates Chamorro and Carolinian traditional cultures (including their arts, technologies, economic practices) to mathematics and science topics.
2. Students with limited English proficiency illustrate science concepts using photographic illustrations and short text and audio captions in their own language and in English.

Example 2

A teacher from Rota (CNMI) incorporates study of how local fishing traps are constructed in her science program.

1. Web site demonstrates information/materials on how fishing traps are constructed.
2. Students visit the local Aging Center, where elders demonstrate ways to select the appropriate gauge of wire, how to measure the proper lengths of wire, and how to build traps.
3. Students digitize their art, scientific illustrations, and images of the beach and countryside taken on numerous field trips.

Example 3

A teacher from Yap (FSM) teaches a science lesson on planting yams that requires application of many mathematical and scientific concepts.

1. Students use digital cameras to capture images of learning about many aspects of yam planting, i.e., measurement of the depth of the hole in the soil and the appropriate distance between plants (depending on an estimate of how big the plant will grow to be), different types of soil, which trees yams can be planted under, etc.

Example 4

A teacher from Chuuk (FSM) describes a lesson on pounding breadfruit into poi.

1. Students document their learning: estimating the number of breadfruit required for a given number of people; water measurement; leaf identification (only the leaves of particular plants can be used to cover breadfruit after preparation—some preserve it, some spoil it).

Example 5

A teacher from Saipan (CNMI) develops an ocean unit each year that is closely linked to the practices and values of Chamorro and Carolinian cultures.

1. Web site begins with the cultural heritage and experiences of the students.
2. Students make explicit ties to local scientific knowledge about tide patterns, weather prediction and navigation practices.

Example 6

A teacher from Palau develops math lessons using traditional Palauan counting systems that employ numeral classifiers. These semantically specialized prefixes to numerals refer to features such as size, shape, texture, etc. indicating, for example, two flat sticks or two smooth sticks.

1. Web site uses text and digitized cultural images to introduce the Palauan counting system and its uses.
2. It introduces comparisons between the Palauan system/interpretations and other cultural forms (similar to Japanese, different from English).
3. It offers illustrations of the range of cognitive strategies demanded by different systems (e.g., Palauan system can help children learn some concepts more quickly—"place value" expressed more directly in Palauan three10s, than in English, 30).

Example 7

A Saipan (CNMI) teacher arranges field trips to various sites in the islands to study ecosystems.

1. Using digital cameras, students plan, create, and edit a Web-based pictorial essay on the ecosystems of the Banzai Cliffs.
2. Students incorporate text and audio captions in Chamorro/Carolinian and in English.
3. Teacher integrates local culture into instruction interacting with students speaking their native language.

Currently, the teachers are developing these lessons with the idea of creating rich examples that can help to improve other teachers' capacities to conceptualize culturally appropriate instruction. Currently, we are working together as researchers to clarify issues, to make implicit understandings and rationales explicit, and to emphasize details that may have been taken for granted. In other words, using examples from our experiences and learning, we are exploring many layers of factors that influence the under-

standing of culture-based instruction. By examining these elements, we hope to add meaningful examples to a relatively meager literature. However, it is not enough to identify cultural content along with culture-based ways of knowing, learning, and teaching. One must understand the historical, social, and political forces that shape the actions of teachers, students, and parents—and of educational systems. In the case of the Micronesian entities, occupation by forces from the numerous cultures mentioned earlier has led to profound and, at times, rapid social change.

In addition, there is considerable research and theory that can guide a thoughtful approach to incorporating ethnomathematics and ethnoscience in instruction so that gaps between their own world views and the mathematics and science of school will be addressed. The apparent value of incorporating activities like the examples above lies in their potential for showing connections to common conceptual underpinnings and/or ways in which epistemologies converge or diverge. Such a move goes well beyond the sort of cultural validation that educators assume leads to student self-esteem, and which they justify on those grounds alone.

SOME CAUTIONS IN IMPLEMENTING CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION BASED ON ETHNOMATHEMATICS AND ETHNOSCIENCE

Although having knowledgeable teachers who make use of students' lived mathematics and science experience seems to make common sense, we must be clear about the relationships between mathematics and science as taught in schools and ethnomathematics and ethnoscience and the ways that these sets of practices and ideas inform one other. As discussed elsewhere, (Nelson-Barber & Estrin, 1996; Trumbull, et al., forthcoming), when ethnomathematics and ethnoscience are transported from their natural environment into the classroom they may lose some of their authenticity. That is, the immediate need to engage in such practices is lost, and an activity may seem contrived. On the other hand, if students are engaged in posing problems for the classroom that require mathematical and scientific thinking—or if teachers pose for them legitimate problems that relate to their own lives outside of school—meaningful learning may occur. In some cases, it is not clear that explicit connections between school mathematics and science and real-world applications are necessary or sensible. If, for example, rote algorithms that are "demathematized" serve the purposes to which they are put in the workplace, is there a need to unmask the way they operate mathematically, so that users have a formal representation of what they are doing? What effect does it have on a culture to have its ethnomathematical and ethnoscientific practices translated into West-

ern academic terms? Do members have a choice? If links are to be made between particular cultural forms of mathematics and classroom practices, what kinds of knowledge do teachers need to have? Some implications seem clearer than others do.

As stated earlier, simplistic adoption of an ethnomathematics/science approach as a solution to the need to create a culturally responsive mathematics/science curriculum may not succeed. One risk is the failure to understand non-western cultural practices on their own terms, or the attribution of mathematical categories to those practices that members of the culture may not claim (Dowling, 1991). For example, to insist on finding mathematics in basket weaving may be a case of "the hegemony of European rationalism," (Dowling, 1991, p. 106) and may result in the devaluing of the cultural practices as perceived by those who engage in them. Likewise, we may tend to devalue everyday ethnomathematical practices, such as those shoppers use, unless their users understand them in "school" mathematical terms. But is an activity any less important, valid, intelligent, or understood by its users if it is not captured in formal mathematical terms?"

In our vision of the classroom, students would learn how to represent and solve problems and to conduct investigations related to their own interests and past experiences, with one goal being to learn the formalized language and procedures of academic mathematics and science as well. We also infer from cognitive development research that starting with the experience and working to understanding the concepts and procedures may be more appropriate for all students than doing just the opposite. Rather than introducing a new concept by asking students to read about the topic, a teacher might ask students to describe their own experiences, observations, and interactions with the topic first (cf. Pomeroy, 1988). Indigenous students often know much about science related to preserving and maintaining the environment—water pollution, toxic waste, agricultural and industrial chemicals, and wise use of technology (Enos, 2001; Lee, 2001; Massell & Enos, 2001; Preston, 1991). However, explanation, discussion, and elaborated experiences will surely be necessary to help students see the relations among ordinary problem-solving activities that can be construed as entailing mathematical and scientific concepts and procedures and the mathematics and science of the classroom or academy.

Because ethnomathematics and ethnoscience offer the potential for an active classroom role for each student—by virtue of being more familiar to the students than teachers in most cases and of requiring the students' interpretation—they are an attractive route to motivating the acquisition of "school" mathematics and science.

We must bear in mind, however, that apparent links across these realms of theory and practice may not be evident to students. Teachers will want to ask students to talk about the connections they see and how they would go

about solving a particular kind of daily problem out of the classroom. Then, perhaps with the teacher's coaching, they can talk about how they might solve the problem using mathematics they have learned in school. The point would not be to invalidate an ethnomathematical or ethnoscientific (or demathematized) solution, but to explore the pros and cons of such a solution versus a "classroom" solution.

FINAL OBSRVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Today's teachers are being called upon to teach mathematics and science in ways that not only reflect high standards of content and performance and promote certain habits of mind, but that also actively engage our nation's increasingly diverse student body. If the ethnomathematics and ethnoscience of Micronesia are to be incorporated in school curricula and instruction, the step of mapping between ethnomathematics and ethnoscience knowledge and procedures and the accepted mathematics and science standards must be taken. This calls for a systematic analysis of the mathematics and science concepts, principles, and procedures inherent in the ethnomathematics and ethnoscience of communities, which must be done for both pedagogical and political reasons. Ethnomathematics and ethnoscience activities are likely to gain credibility among parents and policymakers only when it can be decisively shown that they do call upon concepts and skills exemplified in the standards.

With expanded data that shows possibilities to teachers and through outreach to additional indigenous contexts, this work has the potential to deepen and broaden the disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge of teachers and promote school cultures supportive of all students. As improved understanding of the *culture-specific* ways in which teachers convey *content-specific* mathematics and science knowledge enters the public domain, more educators can learn to honor student knowledge as they work with them to refine their understandings of the school-based mathematics, science and technology that also are essential to survival in the twenty-first century.

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NOTE

1. This took place as told to the author by one of the Americans, Lynn Jacobson, who lived in the Marshall Islands at the time.

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CHAPTER 4

RETHINKING MULTICULTURALISM:

ATTENDING TO INDIAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' STORIES OF NEGOTIATING SELF-REPRESENTATIONS

Nina Asher

INTRODUCTION

Multicultural education is a discourse that has emerged in an effort to create spaces of representation for those who have been marginalized, rendered invisible, and, in various ways, "othered" in educational theory, research, and practice. Certainly, the considerable body of literature which now exists in this area (see, for instance, Banks, 1996; Banks & Banks, 1995; Sleeter & Grant, 1988) has served to inform the field about the need to attend to learners from diverse racial, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds. Furthermore, critical pedagogical approaches (see, for instance, Freire, 1982; Giroux & McLaren, 1994) have offered ways of seeing education as a vehicle to combat social, cultural, and class-based inequalities and transform structures of oppression. Scholars who write about diversity and difference from postmodern, postcolonial perspectives (see, for instance, Asher & Crocco, 2001; Hooks, 1990, 1994; McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993)

have underscored the need to analyze the dynamic, context-specific intersections of race-class-gender-culture-language-history-geography in school and society. They argue that, unlike cultural pluralism and relativism, this approach allows us to deconstruct the fluid and contested relations of power which shape identities, cultures, and representations in particular contexts. Critical approaches also take into consideration our own participation in social, educational, and educational systems we are trying to change. Thus, today, there are a number of different approaches to creating spaces of representation for marginalized, othered peoples. At the same time, it is important to examine, on an ongoing basis, both the successes and limitations of multicultural education to date in order to ensure that the discourse is indeed serving to deconstruct othering.

Broadly, multicultural discourse has tended to focus on issues of race and culture more so than class and gender. Furthermore, issues of race have largely been discussed in terms of Black and White, with the concerns of other racial/ethnic minority groups receiving less attention. In this chapter, I examine how Asian Americans and issues related to their education remain marginalized in relation to the larger discourse of multicultural education.

MULTICULTURALISM AND THE OTHERING OF ASIAN AMERICANS

One phenomenon which is particularly relevant to the marginalization of Asian Americans is their characterization as the "model minority." The model minority stereotype "suggests that Asian Americans are 'outwhiting whites' and have overcome discrimination to be more successful than whites" and, therefore, when they are included in the discourse on race, it is "to talk about their apparent 'success'" (Lee, 1996, p. 5). For instance, as model minorities, they are stereotyped as economically successful, while other racial minorities are stereotyped in "overtly negative ways" (Lee, 1996, p. 5). This popular portrayal of Asian Americans presents a monolithic image and ignores their diverse realities in terms of ethnicities, immigration histories, socioeconomic status and academic achievement (Asher, Goodwin, Genishi, & Woo, 1997; Chun, 1995; Pang, 1995). Under this stereotype, Asian American students are largely represented as untroubled and compliant, excelling in math and science and succeeding in spite of racial barriers and discrimination.

Analyzing the effect of the model minority stereotype at the macro level, Lee (1996) recognizes it as a "hegemonic device" which serves the interests of the dominant culture by inviting the participation of Asian Americans in their own marginalization and, at the same time, separating

them from other minority communities. In terms of its operation at the micro level, I have discussed elsewhere (Asher, 2001) the microprocesses which factor into "constructing the Asian American self as an academic and professional success story" (p. 80), thereby reifying the model minority stereotype. Young Asian Americans internalize messages from home, school, and the broader social context and come to see themselves as choosing financially promising careers such as medicine and business, over other interests such as theater, journalism, and teaching. Further, such broader social forces as social class, the socioeconomic and cultural realities confronted by immigrant parents, and specific cultural expectations intersect and shape the particular realities of individual students. As I have noted, "Such apparently benign characterizations become part of the self-knowledge of Asian Americans and, in effect, ensure that they do live by the label [model minority] in order to continue being accepted within the mainstream context" (Asher, 2001, p. 84).

Thus, Asian Americans internalize the oppressor and remain on the margins in a number of fields, "whose primary vehicle for professional activities is either linguistic communication or interpersonal contacts" (Chun, 1995, p. 105). Certainly, in the area of education, scholars (Goodwin, Genishi, Asher, & Woo, 1997; Nakanishi & Nishida, 1995; Rong & Preissle, 1997) have noted the underrepresentation of Asian Americans in curriculum, teaching, and teacher education. Therefore, in terms of "story," "representation," and "voice," Asian American narratives are generally absent in the very arenas, including that of multicultural educational discourse, which offer opportunities to raise and address these issues.

ENGAGING POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES TO RETHINK MULTICULTURALISM

Postcolonial perspectives and approaches to multiculturalism offer one of the ways by which the complex processes of negotiating identities and (self) representations can be brought to light in curriculum and teaching. For instance, McCarthy (1993) argues for a critical approach to multiculturalism which presents a "more systematic critique of the construction of school knowledge and the privileging of Eurocentrism and Westernness in the American school curriculum" (p. 294) and focuses on the relationality of school knowledge and the complexities of racial identity formation of minority and majority groups. Therefore, rather than considering racial and ethnic identities as a given, multicultural education would examine race, class, gender, culture, ethnicity, and history as dynamic, intersecting, sociopolitical forces which shape not only the lives of students and teachers, but also curriculum, teaching, and teacher knowledge. Such an

approach would allow us to bring to light, analyze, and deconstruct not only the macro and micro processes which operate to ensure that Western knowledge and perspectives remain at the center of the curriculum, but also the struggles of those on the margins to negotiate identity and self-representation.

Furthermore, postcolonial feminist writings in particular recognize the implicatedness and participation of those on the margins in the very systems and relations of power against which they struggle. For instance, women academics of color (Hooks, 1990; Lorde, 1984; Trinh, 1989) have struggled with the contradiction of the loss of identity they experience as, in the process of generating their scholarship, they necessarily become familiar with the language and manners of the oppressor, and cannot avoid using white, patriarchal language. With regard to Asian Americans, a similar analysis might be useful in understanding how they participate in reifying the model minority stereotype as, in the process of establishing themselves in the United States, they typically choose science- and business-related career paths, which hold the promise of financial security, over such fields as teaching, art, journalism, and so on.

Finally, postcolonial feminist writings also address the contradictions those on the margins encounter as they attempt to recenter their own knowledge, ideas, and beliefs in the context of the larger, "dominant" culture as well as the multiple, different cultures in which they live. In this process of renegotiation, Asian Americans and others who live in multiple cultures—"inhabit borderlands" (Anzaldúa, 1987)—arrive at a new, hybrid consciousness—a "mestiza consciousness" (Anzaldúa, 1987). Therefore, from a postcolonial perspective, even as multicultural representations would recognize cultural differences and specificities, they would also address the dynamic, fluid character of the identities and cultures of those who struggle at the margins.

Given this context of the marginalization and implicatedness of Asian Americans in multicultural education and social contexts, the main questions this paper considers are: What are the microprocesses which operate, in diverse local contexts, to "other " Asian American students, despite the seeming advantages of their model minority status? How do Asian American students negotiate self-representations in terms of identity, culture, and curriculum in the contexts of their schools and homes? What are the implications of these findings in terms of deconstructing the model minority stereotype and rethinking multiculturalism?

In order to shed light on the microprocesses of marginalization, I turn now to the stories of 10 Indian American high school students in New York City. I analyze the (multi)cultural realities they encounter at school and home as well as their struggles to negotiate self-representation in terms of identity, social and cultural context, and curriculum. The discussion reveals

the intersection of the forces of race, culture, and class at which young Asian Americans are othered, despite the seeming advantages of their model minority status. The implications for rethinking multiculturalism as well as for transformation and agency in school and society are discussed.

THE STUDY

The study was designed, within a constructivist framework, to unearth and analyze issues related to academic achievement, career choice, and identity confronting Indian American high school students in New York City. The study was originally focused on a broader population—South Asian American students—and the plan was to interview Bangladeshi American, Indian American, and Pakistani American students in New York City high schools. However, given certain exigencies encountered in the field, the sample comprised only of Indian American students. For instance, at Wentworth[1], I was directed by the school administration to the Indian Student Organization (ISO) and also to the Organization of Muslim Students (OMS)—where I believe there were students from different South Asian backgrounds—to identify potential participants. However, the OMS refused to consider having any of its members participate in my study, with one member telling me that the study was "for the Indians not the Muslims" (Asher, 1999, p. 42), which, of course, is a spurious divide. In the course of gathering data, I came to learn that there were deep interracial and interethnic divides among the students within the larger context of the school. Further, in terms of the macro-context, I was aware that the United States had been at war with Iraq a few years prior to my collecting data and that, more immediately, the World Trade Center in New York City had withstood a terrorist attack. I wondered in what ways these factors, at least indirectly, contributed to the reluctance of the OMS to have me—an "outsider"—interview any of its members. Thus, I found my access, as an educational researcher, to students of diverse South Asian American backgrounds was being shaped by micro- and macro-contextual factors.

Further, the original goal was to interview students from two public schools where Asian Americans are represented in large numbers—a competitive "math and science" high school in New York City and a comprehensive high school located in an area where there is a large concentration of Asians and Asian Americans. While it was possible to gather data in one of the competitive, public high schools, once again, given certain exigencies in the field, it proved to be impossible to do so in a comprehensive high school. For instance, typically, the potential participants I identified at the comprehensive high school were not permitted by their parents to participate in the study. I wondered how factors related to being immigrants

(language, social class, familiarity with context of schooling, security of one's immigration status) might have influenced the decision of the parents. By contrast, there were no denials from the parents of potential participants at either Wentworth, a prestigious, public, math-and-science magnet high school, or Greenacres, an expensive, private school. Thus, once again, my access to diverse Asian American students—this time from different class backgrounds (in terms of academic preparation and/or socioeconomic status)—was restricted. As a result, I ended up with Indian American participants who appeared to fit the model minority image of Asian Americans, in that they excelled academically and/or they came from affluent, upper middle class homes.

Altogether, 10 Indian American high school students in the New York City area were interviewed for this qualitative study. Five students from each of two contrasting schools—a competitive, public high school, "Wentworth," and a private school, "Greenacres"—were interviewed (see Appendix A for an overview of the two schools). Fiercely competitive, Wentworth is one of the three "math and science" public high schools in New York City. Its student body is 50% Asian American. This statistical reality bears out the model minority stereotype in that it reflects Asian Americans as excelling in math and science. School spirit at Wentworth is low; students typically concentrate on preparing for entry into prestigious undergraduate programs. Diversity in the student population at Wentworth is evident in the number of ethnic-identified student organizations, representing diverse groups such as Korean, Muslim, Indian, Jewish, and so on.

In contrast to Wentworth, Greenacres is a private school, with 8.2% Asian Americans in its student body. Furthermore, Greenacres is high in school spirit and the student population comprises a mix of academically driven students as well as those more focused on the social aspects. With regard to reflecting diversity in the student population, Greenacres, which is much smaller than Wentworth, has one organization addressing diversity-related issues and subgroups representing different ethnicities, for instance Asian and African Americans, have begun emerging. The major similarity between the two schools is that both are seen as prestigious institutions and students at each are expected, typically, to earn graduate degrees and pursue professional careers.

A purposive sampling strategy was used to identify participants for the interviews. The sample consisted of female and male eleventh and twelfth grade students, all of whom had been attending school in the United States since at least the first grade. A screening questionnaire, which was used to identify potential participants, also yielded information regarding their particular sociocultural/ethnic backgrounds (see Appendix B). This allowed for a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds to be represented in the sample.

A series of three, in-depth, semi-structured interviews, conducted with each of the participants, served as the main source of data. The interviews focused on the messages from school and home that these students said they received, in relation to four areas: academic achievement, career choice, social behavior, and identity. The screening questionnaire and an event-sampling guide, used for observing each of the participants, served as sources of additional data.

Broadly, the study found that, in relation to academic achievement and career choice, these young Asian Americans experience pressure to excel and plan ahead for careers that ensure future financial security and success. And, in relation to social behavior and identity, given the differences in the home and school contexts and cultures, they experience interracial, interethnic, and intercultural dissonance and tensions in negotiating self-representation and identity in each setting.

Here, I draw from the larger study to share data which reveal the particular, quotidian realities—the microprocesses—of negotiating self-representations in which the 10 Indian American high school students[2] engage at school and home. I focus specifically on their efforts to negotiate self-representations in terms of identity, social and cultural context, and curriculum to understand the processes of marginalization that operate in the apparently multicultural contexts of their schools and homes in New York City.

NEGOTIATING IDENTITY, CULTURE, AND CURRICULUM: INDIAN AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS AT SCHOOL AND HOME

Despite the multicultural contexts of their schools and New York City, the participants struggle in various ways to represent themselves, their identities and cultural backgrounds. These efforts occur within the classroom, in extracurricular contexts within the school as well as in the contexts of the home and the community. *Interpreting and asserting identity, seeking social and cultural representation,* and *interrogating the curriculum* are the distinct and interrelated themes that emerge from the analysis of the dynamics of multiculturalism in these particular contexts.

In their schools as well as in their home contexts, the participants engage in argument, debate, discussion to *interpret and assert identity.* While the school represents the "American" context in which they struggle to assert their identities and cultures as Asian Americans, the home represents the "Indian" context in which they struggle to assert themselves as "Americans" (Asher, 1999). For instance, even in the visibly diverse context of Wentworth, with half of its student body being Asian American, Sanjoy finds himself struggling with the realization that asserting a hybrid iden-

tity—"being a hyphenated American"—is a contested issue in the context of the school. He finds that his "American" (read "white") peers expect others (read "those of color") should be just like them.

> When you come into school, totally different type of life. Clash of two very distinctly different cultures. There aren't that many—I mean between Asian cultures there are things that overlap—between Asian and American cultures there aren't that many chains of thought or beliefs or practices that overlap. And when direct, direct contradiction comes in you have to, I mean you can't retain your Indian values. You have to give them up to fit in with everyone else in this society.

> Once we're in school, I think that an American lifestyle is one that is advocated by everyone. I think, er, the American kids … they want us and they expect us to be American. I mean I've even heard a kid, … when we had this discussion about being hyphenated Americans, like, Indian-American, "Why do you have to say that? Why can't you just say American?" And you can't bring out the argument that I am half-Indian. I am not a whole American. And there's this thing that you should embrace American culture, which is in essence European culture. That's not realized by many people. The fact that a lot of people believe that America has a distinct culture that everyone can embrace. And a thing with diversity in terms of what, how you should be, that's not, I don't think that's advocated by anyone—that you can, you come from, you should have diverse influences in how you lead your life. I think that homogeneous, homogeneity is something that everyone likes, conformity. Something everyone likes 'cuz that's where people get security from. If everyone looks the same as you, you don't have that much to worry about.

Similarly, Vijay talks about how difficult it is to get his non-Asian peers at Greenacres to understand particular issues—such as respect for parents and elders and compliance with their wishes—with which he as well as other young Asian Americans grapple, *as* Asian Americans.

> [L]ike, I don't know if you remember what, um, that boy, David [a fellow Asian American student], was saying, in my English class that day.

> Oh, especially, like what he was saying about parents. About how parents are regarded, I think, very differently by different cultures. Like, particularly, I think Asians in general have a very, very, extremely high level of respect for their parents and their wishes. And a lot of times, they tell you to do something and you do it. You don't say, "Why?" You just do it—because, well, they are your parents. But if I were to try to convey that message to a lot of my non-Asian friends, they would just, they would just gawk almost. They would be like, "Well, if I don't want to do it, I would just say 'No!'" … I don't understand how I could convey to them [non-Asian peers] … something which has been embedded in me for my entire life. Like everywhere I go, I mean in

> terms of my family anyway, and family friends who are all Indian, that this is something that is the same way that my non-Asian friends can just go out without telling their parents something or just say "No!" to something that they ask them to do. And the same way they take that so for granted, is the same way I take so for granted that I have to do the exact opposite.

While Sanjoy's and Vijay's words convey a sense of their struggles to interpret identity by attempting to assert differences, Sharmila, a student at Greenacres and the most "American-identified" of all 10 participants, sees herself fitting in as an American: "I was born here, so, like, I'm more of an American, I think, than I am an Indian. ... I'm, like, when I go to India, I don't fit in at all." Further, she believes that, unlike her, most of the other students of Indian descent fit in with the model minority stereotype.

> Like, I think some people have a certain view, they have, like, a pre-set notion of what, like, an Indian person, like, an Indian student, or child, or whatever would be like. They usually tend to be more quiet and whatever, like, and very smart and whatever. And sometimes, like, I don't know, like, most of the Indian students in this school they are, like, quiet, and, like, you know, most of them are very smart kids. So, I think, you know, that that makes the thing believable. ... I don't think they expect, like, everyone to be like that. ... Like, I know myself, I'm not quiet and, like, I've been friends with a lot of people in my grade since fifth grade. So, I don't think they see me as any different from themselves.

So, although Sharmila is not struggling to interpret and assert her identity in terms of her particular differences as an Asian American, and, in fact, knows herself as "American," she has internalized stereotypical representations of Asian Americans which she herself applies to others of Indian descent.

Similarly, these young Asian Americans struggle to interpret and assert identity in the context of the home, where their "Americanness" becomes an issue. Modes of dress and appearance, choice of music, respect for elders and teachers, choice of friends and social activities are among the factors which relate to negotiating identity in the home context. For instance, Poonam, a student at Greenacres, says:

> They [parents] want me to respect my teachers. And my elders. I get into trouble if I get "too fresh." They don't like my tone of voice if I get annoyed and show it in my voice.

> When they think we're talking fresh they say, "You're being too American." I consider myself American. I was born and raised here.

Particularly, in relation to their home contexts, the participants also struggle with asserting identifications with other "minority" communities—

or at least those which their parents and/or other family members believe reflect such identifications. Witness the following dialogue with Nitin:

> **Nitin**: Like, er, like, before, like, baggy pants—you know you can't wear baggy pants. But then as we [Nitin and his twin] keep wearing, you know, they [parents] …
>
> **R**: Um hm, you wore their resistance down. What's with baggy pants?
>
> **Nitin**: Beepers and things like that. Whatever, you know. Like, you are turning Black or something.

In fact, according to Nitin, even his peers at the ISO at Wentworth question his preferred mode of dress: "Like these guys bother me a lot. Like, 'Oh, you know, why d'you wear baggy pants?' and all that." Similarly, Mary's parents disapprove of her sister dressing like "African Americans" and wearing "color-block shirts." In fact, Mary says that they warn her sister that her "'grades are gonna match theirs and go down,' or whatever."

These stories offer glimpses of how, in their day to day lives, at school and home, the participants engage in dialogue and negotiation to *interpret and assert identity*. A range of verbal and non-verbal exchanges, which occur in the quotidian contexts of their classrooms, hallways, and homes, convey conflicting messages to the participants regarding their racial/ethnic/cultural identities. These exchanges exemplify the microprocesses of marginalization of difference(s) as well as the specific struggles to resist the same at school and home. They also reveal the range of identifications—from "hyphenated American," to "Asian American," to "American" (which may even represent other minority cultures)—with which these young Indian Americans relate and attempt to situate themselves at school and home.

The participants also *seek social and cultural representation*, particularly in the contexts of their school. Each school has student organizations and events that serve as sites of representation for students of color. Wentworth has a number of groups representing different ethnicities, including, among them, the Indian Student Organization (ISO). For Mary, the ISO serves as a space of support and cultural affirmation:

> I have, like, a small sub-community within—small, like, sub-community, like, a support, sort of, within—like, this larger thing [the school] where my individuality might not be accepted, respected, or, like, acknowledged—that I am different from everyone else. But within this group, I realize that you know my difference is, like, echoed or maybe even made larger because, you know, like, they're, like, around me.…

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By contrast, Greenacres has one umbrella organization focused on diversity and subgroups have been emerging. At Greenacres, the school assembly or "chapel" also serves as a site of representation for students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds—for instance, Greenacres has an annual Diwali chapel. According to Sharmila:

> Because this school tries to have, like, you know each religion or group or whatever have some kind of chapel to make the others aware. ... They light the candles and they had some of the students speak about what it means.

And yet, in both school contexts, the participants encounter misinformation and experience alienation regarding their cultural backgrounds. The participants also talk about racial tensions, divides, and/or episodes in the contexts of their school. For instance, Mohan speaks about the misinformation he encounters in the context of Greenacres:

> Nobody really knows about religion. About Hindu religion. A few people come up to me and ask me about Buddhism—I'm like, "I'm not a Buddhist" ... As far as them knowing about, like, culture, Indian culture, they all like Indian food. (Mohan and Researcher laughing.) They say, like, the accent, as portrayed on TV and they tend to try and imitate it. It tends to upset me and I tell them to stop.

And in the context of Wentworth, the participants talk about the segregation among students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. According to Nitin:

> In this school like basically, people stay with—like, the Koreans stay with the Koreans, segregate, like, the Blacks ... Like, you know we have a Black spot in the cafeteria. Where all the Black kids sit, like, all the way in the back.

And Amit reflects on how an "Indian" table spontaneously generated itself in the cafeteria.

> Actually, that's kind of funny. Today we got our new schedules ... who is in their lunch period, and this, and that. And, um, at lunch you generally get together with your friends whoever they are.... And, then, like, I was with, like, a couple of Indians. And then, one by one, all of them just keep coming. So we were, like, about eight or nine Indians, like, just sitting there. Then everyone was, like, you know, "It looks a little strange." ... But, I mean, you know, we all, like, hang out together, so ... I guess it is fine.

Thus, at first glance, both schools serve as multicultural contexts which allow for students from diverse backgrounds to represent themselves. But a close look at some of the day-to-day realities and exchanges in each school

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reveals interracial and interethnic divides and tensions which are part of the lived experiences of these young students and their peers. Further, under the model minority stereotype, these students may be seen as privileged in terms of at least their academic abilities and environments, and also, possibly, in terms of the socioeconomic status of their families (particularly in the case of the students from Greenacres, where parents pay expensive tuition). And yet, despite this seeming advantage, even in a school such as Wentworth where Asian Americans comprise 50% of the student body, these young participants struggle to assert themselves and find spaces of self-representation within the larger context of the school.

The third area of analysis of the multicultural discourse at Wentworth and Greenacres is the curriculum. The formal curriculum of both schools includes content related to Asia, typically in social studies and literature classes. For instance, with regard to Greenacres, Mohan says:

> When I was younger, they taught us about Gandhi and all that. When I was in 10th grade and stuff. Nowadays we talk about India's nuclear capacity. Err, when I was a lot younger, 7th grade and stuff, we'd talk about, like, the culture, the Eastern cultures and societies. Yeah, so I guess, I mean, it's there. Especially like conversations, spices and all that.

And Amit notes that Wentworth "does offer an Asian American literature course" but that it emphasizes "Chinese, Japanese, that type" of writings over South Asian ones. Further, in each school, the students also encounter opportunities to write and/or present on topics related to their South Asian backgrounds. For instance, Amit has presented on Jainism and Poonam has written essays pertaining to her culture.

At the same time, these students *interrogate the curriculum* in terms of the depth, quality and quantity of representation it affords Asian Americans. For instance, with regard to conversations with teachers and non-Indian peers at Wentworth, Anita recalls expressions of interest in the form of "vague questions about India" or "Indian food."

> **Anita**: Yeah. They have asked me, like, "Why do you wear this? Why do they have the red dot?" Or … um, in English class last time I read, I, like, told a story about, like, the Ramayana (a major Hindu epic) thing—some story I told about Hindu religion.… When we studied India, my teacher was, like, very interested. My friends ask sometimes—vague questions about India.
>
> **R**: So, sometimes in class it has come up too, and in your discussions with friends too. And when you read the Ramayana, or, [rather] part of it —did you, like, volunteer, or, how did it come about?

Anita: It was in an English class and we were—in the beginning of every day, somebody went up for five minutes, and, I think, like, told a story or read something. And I just decided on this story. … My teachers, they like Indian food. They're, like, "Oh, I went to this place the other day. It's, like, such nice food. I love all the food you guys make. It's so nice." They talk about the food mostly.

And, according to Amit, his cultural background is not really represented in Wentworth's curriculum.

> I haven't seen it at all because, I remember, freshman year we were gonna—you know, you learn about World History, and you learn about whatever—China, Japan, India also—but we actually skipped that topic because there wasn't enough time left. So, I don't think we got to learn it in school. So, I haven't really seen it anywhere else. But, maybe, last year … I read this book Siddhartha—have you read it?…
>
> Herman Hesse, but I think it was, like, Indian based, like. But that's basically as far as I've gotten with the Indian view represented here.

Similarly, BK notes that Greenacres does not offer Asian studies courses but that his 10th grade history curriculum was broad and covered events in Asia, Europe, and Central America. Beyond that, BK does not see his particular background represented either in discussions with peers or in the curricular offerings at Greenacres. At the same time, he is aware that students have been petitioning for courses which would be representative of their cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

> But I think that if one group petitions … to start a new course for African American studies, then I am sure that the Asians are going to petition, the Whites and the Italians are going to petition, the Europeans would already have their own course. Err, the Asians, the Polynesians, maybe some other people. Cuz if [only] one ethnic course is created, then there are going to be a lot of discontented people.

He fears that "The school would end up being segregated according to ethnic backgrounds."

Again, despite the apparently multicultural contexts and student populations of the two schools, curricular representations of Indian/South Asian cultures and realities are, largely, incidental and byte-sized in duration. Often, they are limited to the obvious—such as the "red dots" on the foreheads of Indian women—and that which is easily available in New York City—for instance, Indian food. Although current realities—such as India's nuclear capacity—may be represented in the curriculum, it also happens

that content related to Asia/Asians may be bypassed in the interests of time. Furthermore, even the prospect of creating niches for studies pertaining to different marginalized racial/ethnic groups is seen as potentially threatening to the integrity of the school's curriculum. Thus, the Eurocentric norm continues to prevail. The very questions raised and approaches adopted for modifying the curriculum are, at best, premised on an inclusionary model of multiculturalism. Spaces of critical interrogation, analysis, and synthesis of diverse perspectives remain on the margins of the curriculum.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

As the discussion in the preceding section reveals, the microprocesses of negotiating self-representations in multicultural contexts are complex and contradictory. At the same time, these microprocesses occur in and are shaped by the realities and tensions of the larger social context. Therefore, the process of rethinking multiculturalism and relocating the discourse of Asian American education from margins toward center implies deconstructing the forces which serve to maintain and perpetuate the model minority stereotype. Analyzing these issues through a critical, postcolonial, feminist lens can yield useful directions for transformation and agency in educational and social contexts.

First of all, in order to deconstruct the model minority stereotype effectively, it would be necessary to take a context-specific approach. That is, it would be important to identify the particular, contextual factors and negotiations which influence not only individual students' participation in realizing the stereotype but also their resistance to it. For instance, one of the ways in which Sharmila claimed an "American" identification was to construct herself as different from her Indian American peers who, according to her description, fit the stereotype. Thus, even as she rejected the model minority image in relation to herself, she reified it by applying it to other Indian Americans. By contrast, Nitin resisted the model minority stereotype, and, in fact, expressed identification with another "minority" community, by choosing to wear "baggy pants" which are made popular by Black, male youths. And Sanjoy articulated the hybrid, in-between identification of being a "hyphenated American." Thus, a context-specific approach can draw on students' own stories and interpretations of their lived experiences. This can bring to light the ways in which young Asian Americans negotiate multiple racial, ethnic, cultural, class, and gendered identifications and representations.

Secondly, then, multicultural education would emphasize the dynamic nature and the processes of negotiating identities and cultures, particularly in the lives of adolescents. This implies creating curricula which draw on

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and represent the fluidity of identity and culture, rather than relying on fixed, often stereotypical images. Therefore, in addition to drawing on students' stories and voices, the curriculum would focus on deconstructing stereotypes about "minority" cultures and peoples and analyzing related issues of representation. Rather than simply presenting cultural artifacts (such as the "red dots" on the foreheads of Indian women, Indian food, and so on), the curriculum would focus on interrogating their past and present sociocultural significance.

Third, in order to create community in the classroom, multicultural discourse and practice would emphasize a close reading of written narratives, autobiographies, and case studies (Hoffman, 1996; Mohanty, 1991) to engender a dialogue among students across differences. Such a multicultural vision looks toward a "narrative space where conditions may be created where students can tell their own stories, listen closely to the stories of others..." (McLaren, 1994, p. 217). In terms of transformation and agency, then, such a school culture may make it possible, for instance, for the different student organizations at Wentworth to meet in dialogue. This is particularly significant not only in terms of minority-majority (e.g., Asians and Whites) relations but also in terms of inter-minority (e.g., Asians and Blacks) and intragroup (e.g., South Asians of different religious persuasions) relations, so that those on the margins do not participate in further marginalizing themselves due to divisiveness and conflict.

Fourth, teacher education would emphasize the importance of critical self-reflexivity (Hoffman, 1996) for the meaningful practice of multiculturalism. That is, future teachers would learn ways of interrogating their own knowledge and practice of multiculturalism in order to challenge and deconstruct their own as well as their students' assumptions regarding racial, ethnic, and gendered identities and cultures. This also implies preparing teachers to recognize, work with and reflect on the contradictions of participating in the very systems that they, as educators, need to change as part of the progress toward greater social justice. Finally, multicultural education needs to consider drawing on parents and communities in order to address the barriers to dialoguing across different ethnic groups which exist outside the classroom and the school. For, as Hooks (1990) has noted, "the work of resistance may begin not only with the colonizer/oppressor but "it may begin with one's segregated, colonized community and family" (p. 151). This would facilitate the deconstruction of interracial and interethnic barriers which isolate different communities of color. By establishing "horizontal affiliations" (Lowe, 1996, p. 71) with other groups on the margins, it would be possible to build coalitions to address shared struggles and goals of social transformation.

NOTES

1. "Wentworth" and "Greenacres" are pseudonyms. The two schools are located in different boroughs of New York City. Also, see Appendix A for a summary table describing the contexts of the two schools.

2. Pseudonyms are used for all participants in the study and matched for each participant's regional and ethnic background.

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APPENDIX A

Table 1. The School Context—Two Schools in New York City

Wentworth	*Greenacres*
• Large, public high school, grades 9–12—total number of students is about 2,750. • 50% of student population is Asian American. • A well-known, highly competitive specialized "science" high school. A prestigious institution. • Typically, students go on to obtain graduate degrees—professional careers often the goal. • Low on school spirit, student culture not so much that of "partying" as putting energy into building profiles to get into reputed colleges. • Many student organizations based on race and ethnicity—for instance, there are Indian, Jewish, Korean, and Muslim students' groups, among others.	• Small, private school, grades 5–12—total number of students is 650. • 8.2% of student population is Asian American. • Academically highly regarded school, parents pay high tuition for it. A prestigious institution. • Typically, students go on to obtain graduate degrees—professional careers often the goal. • High on school spirit, participation in sports, theatre, etc. While there are academically "driven" students, there is a distinct "partying" crowd among the student population. • One umbrella organization addressing issues of racial and ethnic diversity. Subgroups organized around specific ethnicities (such as Asian and, African American) have emerged recently.

APPENDIX B

Table 2. Biographical Profiles of Participants—Socio-Cultural Data

Name of Participant x School (W=Went worth, G=Green acres)	*Gender*	*Grade*	*South Asian Languages Spoken at Home*	*South Asian Region/ Community as Point of Reference within US*	*Religious Background of Family*
Amit (W)	M	12	Hindi	Jain, jewelry community from Jaipur, India	Jainism
Anita (W)	F	11	Malayalam	Malayalee, Nair community from Kerala, India	Hinduism
Mary (W)	F	12	Malayalam	Malayalee Christians from Kerala, India	Christianity
Nitin (W)	M	12	Gujarati	Jain community	Jainism
Sanjoy (W)	M	12	Bengali	Bengali community	Hinduism
Balakrishna (goes by BK) (G)	M	11	Kannada, Hindi	none mentioned	Hinduism

Table 2. Biographical Profiles of Participants—Socio-Cultural Data (Cont.)

Name of Participant x School (W=Wentworth, G=Greenacres)	*Gender*	*Grade*	*South Asian Languages Spoken at Home*	*South Asian Region/ Community as Point of Reference within US*	*Religious Background of Family*
Mohan (G)	M	12	Telegu	Indian community of doctors in the area	Hinduism
Poonam (G)	F	11	Hindi	none mentioned	Hinduism
Sharmila (G)	F	11	Bengali	mentioned family's decision to limit association with Indian community in area	Hinduism
Vijay (G)	M	12	Telegu	Indian community	Hinduism

CHAPTER 5

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN INTERACTIONS AROUND MATHEMATICS TASKS IN CHINESE AMERICAN AND EUROPEAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

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INTRODUCTION

The strong mathematics performance of Asian American children in the United States has been well documented (e.g., Caplan, Choy, & Whitmore, 1992; Stevenson, Lee, Chen, Lummis, Stigler, Fan, & Ge, 1990). Recent research studies (e.g., Huntsinger, Jose, Liaw, & Ching, 1997) have found that the phenomenon begins before entry into first grade. Cross-cultural studies have examined differences in cultural values, home language, and parental beliefs and expectations to explain this mathematics achievement (e.g., Chen & Stevenson, 1995; Miller, 1997). Cultural values, beliefs, and expectations are transmitted through what parents actually do with their children. Because early mathematics development is socially and culturally constructed (Ginsburg, Klein, & Starkey, 1998), it is important to examine

the Asian American and European American parents' and children's behaviors in mathematics-focused interactions. Because the term Asian American encompasses a diverse set of cultures, we have narrowed our focus to Chinese Americans, who represent the largest group of Asian Americans in the United States (Uba, 1994).

Vygotskian theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction with a mentor (often the parent) in a child's cognitive development. It asserts that cognitive development occurs through joint participation in culturally valued activities by a novice and an expert (Rogoff, 1990). Culture shapes what parents believe and what practices they employ to socialize their children for academic achievement. These beliefs and practices influence children's academic outcomes. For example, Huntsinger, Jose, and Larson (1998) found that Chinese American parents use more didactic methods for teaching mathematics to their young children and Chinese American children spend more time practicing skills than do their middle class European American counterparts. This parental instruction and children's practice at home was found to contribute significantly to the Chinese American children's mathematics superiority.

In addition to cultural differences in preferred teaching practices, it is possible that parental styles also differ. Parental style has been defined by Cowan, Powell, and Cowan (1998) as "the emotional climate in which parenting behaviors are expressed." Most conceptions of parenting style are based on a typology which includes the core dimensions of warmth/responsiveness and control/demandingness (Baumrind, 1971; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). A parent rated high on the warmth dimension is accepting, affectionate, and responsive, and she or he experiences pleasure from being with her/his child. A parent rated high on the control dimension communicates using directives and imperatives, provides structure, communicates expectations, closely supervises his/her child's behavior, and firmly enforces limits. These widely accepted dimensions were derived from research in Western societies which emphasize individualism. Chinese American parents originated in cultures which have traditionally been more collective in nature (e.g., Bond & Hwang, 1986; Greenfield & Suzuki, 1998; Kagitcibasi, 1996). In individualist countries (i.e., the United States), children are socialized for independence; in collectivist cultures (i.e., China), children are socialized for interdependence. How might these cultural differences in socialization goals be expressed in parent and child behaviors?

Greenfield and Suzuki (1998) have articulated some of the differences in parent-child communication styles that emerge when comparing individualist with collectivist cultures. In countries that value independence, verbal communication is necessary because there is greater distance between parent and child (Azuma, 1994). The child is viewed as an autono-

mous being and is encouraged to express himself/herself. Parents ask frequent questions of and give frequent praise to the child. Children are encouraged to question and negotiate with parents. On the other hand, in countries that value interdependence, there is a greater emphasis on nonverbal communication—empathy, observation, and participation in joint activities. Much physical closeness between parent and child is the norm, which allows the child to absorb parental values through osmosis (transmission to the child without intentional teaching). The emphasis is on child comprehension, rather than verbalization; therefore, parents often speak for the child. Parents give frequent directives and imperatives, which elicit action rather than verbalization on the part of the child. Parents rarely praise their children. Children do not expect praise for carrying out their tasks; they consider tasks as their contributions to the cooperative effort. Harmony, respect, and obedience are fostered in the child.

Many immigrants to the United States have entered an individualistic culture, but have brought their collectivist values with them. Immigrant parents from collectivist cultures very likely retain parenting styles reflecting their home culture. Their beliefs about appropriate parenting are likely to differ from those of the middle-class white majority in the United States. Immigrant Chinese American parents seem to ascribe to the Chinese child-rearing ideologies reflecting the concepts of *chiao shun* (training children in the appropriate behaviors) and *guan* (to govern) (Chao, 1994). Therefore, Chinese American parents are probably more directive and controlling in their parenting style, reflecting rigorous and responsible teaching of and high involvement with their children (Chao, 1994).

Parents are the earliest mentors children have; yet few studies have focused on the role of parental teaching in mathematics success. The social processes involved in this guided participation can best be evaluated through observational studies. However, there is a dearth of observational data to document the processes involved in parental teaching, especially in different cultural contexts. To date, most observational studies of parental teaching have been conducted with European American populations and have utilized mothers teaching their children. One exception is a study by Steward and Steward (1973) which involved observations of six mothers from each of three cultural groups (Anglo American, Mexican American, and Chinese American) teaching their young sons. Ethnicity was found to be the best predictor of maternal teaching and child response. In particular, Chinese American mothers used a high proportion of enthusiastic feedback and provided more specific instructions than Anglo American mothers. Because traditional Chinese parents are indulgent with their children below the age of five and then become more strict with their children after that (e.g., Chiu, 1987; Papousek & Papousek, 1991), we might expect to see less overt enthusiasm in their interactions with primary school children.

Another observational study found cultural differences in communication styles between 30 Chinese American and 30 European American families. Chinese American fathers and mothers talked less and gave less verbal encouragement in interactions with their fifth and sixth grade daughters (Huntsinger & Jose, 1995). Chinese mother-father-daughter triads were described as quieter, more orderly, more direct, and more serious; whereas, their European American counterparts were more talkative, more sociable, more interactionally complex, and less serious. In another interaction study, Japanese American spouses were judged to be more restrained, less warm, less empathetic, and less affectionate than were European American spouses (Hsu, Tseng, Ashton, McDermott, & Char, 1985). These studies give us reason to believe that the teaching styles of Chinese American parents may differ from those of European American parents.

Cultural beliefs regarding appropriate academic socialization practices are reflected in actual parental teaching styles. In China and Japan mothers usually emphasize the procedural (bottom-up processing) approach—they demonstrate the procedure to their children (e.g., Gardner, 1989; Hess, Chang, & McDevitt, 1987). Asian mothers expect that their children will infer the correct principle from repeated practice. European American mothers, in contrast, rely on the conceptual (top-down processing) approach and expect the child to master the concept before mastering the task. The difference in mathematics achievement may partly be explained by ethnic group differences in teaching style. To assess whether there are differences in teaching style, we have observed Chinese American and European American parents teaching their children at three time points over the primary school years. Based on the existing literature, we expected to find European American parents (with individualistic upbringing) to be warmer, to talk more, and to make more frequent use of questions and praise in the interactions with their primary school children than their Chinese American counterparts (with collectivist upbringing). We expected European American children to talk more in the interactions with their parents than their Chinese American counterparts. On the other hand, we expected Chinese American parents to be more directive, to make greater use of demonstration, to be more restrained in emotional expression, and to engage in interactions of longer duration.

METHOD

Sample

In 1993 (Time 1) 40 second-generation Chinese American children (mean age = 5.67 yrs.) and 40 European American children (mean age =

5.60 yrs.) and their parents were recruited to participate in this longitudinal study. Letters were sent to parents of children in high quality preschools, kindergartens, and weekend Chinese schools in the northern and western suburbs of Chicago. Each group comprised 10 preschool girls, 10 preschool boys, 10 kindergarten girls, and 10 kindergarten boys. (See Table 1 for sample demographics.) All children came from comparably well-educated two-parent families in the suburban Chicago area. In the Chinese American sample, countries of origin included Taiwan (38 mothers, 38 fathers), Hong Kong (1 mother), and mainland China (1 mother, 2 fathers). Chinese was spoken in the homes by the immigrant parents of the Chinese American children. Thirty-seven of the families spoke Mandarin and three families spoke Taiwanese. All of the parents had immigrated to the United States as adults; most came for graduate study. While there were no between group differences in age of parents, age of child, family size, educational attainment level, and Hollingshead social status scores, the Chinese American parents had careers with greater mathematics relevance. Many Chinese Americans have pursued graduate work in the United States in scientific and technical fields. This is because of (a) their self-perceptions of lower facility in the English language and relatively greater self-confidence in mathematics; and (b) their perceptions that careers in science represent a faster route to upward mobility (Sue & Okazaki, 1990).

Table 1. Sample Demographics at Time 3 (1997)

	Chinese American			*European American*		
	N	*Mean*	*S.D.*	*N*	*Mean*	*S.D.*
Age of child		9.75	.34		9.70	.32
Boys in sample	17			18		
Girls in sample	18			20		
Number of children in family		2.21	.55		2.41	.71
Mother's age		41.38	2.88		40.88	4.40
Father's age		43.77	3.09		43.62	4.84
Mother's educational attainment*		16.73	1.94		17.18	1.32
Father's educational attainment*		18.23	2.21		17.68	1.81
Hollingshead (1975) status score		59.83	6.81		60.77	4.63

Note. There are no significant differences on any of the sample characteristics.
* 16 = bachelor's degree; 18 = master's degree.

Of the total of 80 families in the study at Time 1, 73 (34 Chinese American, 39 European American) agreed to be videotaped. At Time 2 when the

children were in first and second grades (1995), 95% of the original sample participated (36 Chinese American children and 40 European American children). Three of the Chinese American children had moved back to Hong Kong or Taiwan. Of the 76 families in the study at Time 2, 70 (32 Chinese American and 38 European American) agreed to be videotaped. At Time 3 (1997), 35 Chinese American and 38 European American third and fourth grade children and their mothers and fathers participated. This represents 91 percent of the original families. Of the total of 73 families in the study at Time 3, 68 agreed to be videotaped (31 Chinese American mothers, 30 Chinese American fathers and 36 European American mothers and 35 European American fathers).

Procedure. At Time 1 children's mathematics performance was individually assessed in the children's homes or schools using the Test of Early Mathematics Ability-2 (TEMA-2) (Ginsburg & Baroody, 1990). At Times 2 and 3 the Sequential Assessment of Mathematics Inventories (SAMI) (Reisman & Hutchinson, 1985) was individually administered in the children's schools to assess the children's mathematics achievement. Following the testing of the children at each time point, appointments were made with parents to visit their homes for the purpose of videotaping mother-father-child triadic interactions at Time 1 and mother-child and father-child dyadic interactions at Times 2 and 3. Families were paid $5.00 at Time 1, $25.00 at Time 2, and $40.00 at Time 3 for their participation.

Time 1 (1993) Measures

Test of Early Mathematics Ability (2nd edition). The TEMA-2 (Ginsburg & Baroody, 1990), designed for young children from three to eight years of age was used to assess both informal (35 items) and formal (30 items) mathematical thinking. Informal mathematics, acquired outside the context of formal schooling, is assessed by three types of items: concepts of relative magnitude, counting, and calculation. Formal mathematics, learned through explicit instruction using rules, principles, and procedures, is assessed by four types of items: knowledge of convention, number facts, calculation (addition and subtraction), and base-ten concepts.

Videotaped triadic interaction. At Time 1 videotapes were made of mother-father-child triads in which parents were asked to teach their child a counting game. The game consisted of rolling a die which indicated the number of rings to be placed on a player's stand. The goal was to be the first to accumulate exactly 10 rings on one's stand. Parental behaviors were rated on three scales: Directiveness, Warmth, and Clarity; and children's behaviors were rated on three scales: Quiet-Control, Warmth, and Self-Reliance. The parent's Directiveness and Warmth scales and the child's Quiet-

Control, Warmth, and Self-Reliance scales were adapted from Wagner and Phillips (1992). The Clarity scale was constructed for the purposes of this study. (See Jose, Huntsinger, Huntsinger, & Liaw, 2000 for details on the rating process.)

Time 2 (1995) Measures

The Sequential Assessment of Mathematics Inventories. The SAMI (Reisman & Hutchinson, 1985) measures the performance of children from kindergarten through eighth grade in eight strands of mathematics. Seven of the eight subtests were administered: mathematical language (9 items), ordinality (9 items), number and notation (62 items), computation (77 items), measurement (29 items), geometric concepts (21 items), and word problems (18 items). The mathematical applications subtest, designed for students in fourth through eighth grade, was not given. Individual administration takes from 20 to 60 minutes per child. Two subtests (mathematical language and ordinality) are not included in our comparisons of Time 2 scores with Time 3 scores. While the TEMA-2 technically would have been appropriate for the children at Time 2, we wanted to avoid a ceiling effect. Several of the children at Time 1 had completed all 65 items on the TEMA-2; therefore we needed to choose a test that would allow children to work to as high levels as they could.

Videotaped dyadic interaction. At Time 2 mothers and fathers were each asked to individually help their child with mathematics word problems in the child's zone of proximal development. This was accomplished by selecting problems for each child which were slightly more difficult than the highest level problems the child had independently solved on the SAMI. Parent and child behaviors were rated using the six scales named above. In addition, two items regarding the parents' attention to written representation were rated. Ratings for individual items were independently made by two female research assistants, one European American and one Chinese American, on a 7-point scale in which each end of the scale represents a polar opposite. We used the "hit or miss" method (Wagner & Phillips, 1992) to compute interrater reliabilities. If two codes were within one point of each other, the item was coded as a "hit"; otherwise, it was coded as a "miss." Interrater reliability, using the "hits and misses" method ranged from 71% hits on the mothers' directive scale to 90% hits on the fathers' warmth scale. Ratings for all interactions averaged across the two raters were used in the analyses. In addition, we measured the durations of the videotapes and examined the mathematics papers used during the videotaping session.

Time 3 (1997) Measures

Sequential Assessment of Mathematics Inventories. The SAMI (Reisman & Hutchinson, 1985), designed for children from kindergarten through eighth grade, was given to the children when they were in third and fourth grades. Five subtests were used: number and notation (62 items), computation (77 items), measurement (29 items), geometric concepts (21 items) and word problems (18 items).

Time 3 Videotaped Dyadic Interactions. At Time 3 videotapes were made of the mother and the father individually working with their child on two different tasks. Each dyad was given about 5 minutes to work on the puzzle, "Adam's Cube," which consisted of 5 progressively more difficult puzzles (labeled A to E). The child was asked to place the five puzzle pieces into the frame, beginning with Puzzle A. The parent was instructed to give verbal directions, but not to touch the puzzle pieces. In the other task the child was given two mathematics computation problems and one word problem within her/his zone of proximal development. This was accomplished by selecting computation problems and word problems just slightly more difficult than the highest level problems the child had correctly solved on the SAMI. Both the order of task presentation and the order in which the parents participated were counterbalanced.

The same parent behavior rating scales (Directiveness, Warmth, and Clarity) and child behavior rating scales (Quiet-Control, Warmth, and Self-Reliance), adapted from Wagner and Phillips (1992), were used for rating mathematics interactions at Time 3 (see Appendix for specific items). A separate set of rating scales was used for the puzzle interaction (see Table 2). Ratings for individual items were independently made by two female research assistants, one immigrant Chinese American and one European American, on a 7-point scale in which each end of the scale represents a polar opposite. Interrater reliability, which was determined by the "hits and misses" method described above ranged from 72% to 79% for the child and parent behaviors on all tasks. Ratings for all interactions averaged across the two raters were used in the analyses.

In addition to the global behavior ratings, a more fine-grained analysis was used to aid our understanding of the dyadic interactions. The Time 2 and Time 3 dyads' conversations were transcribed by research assistants and the first author. Each utterance was coded using a 10-speech act coding scheme for each of the two interlocuters. The following scheme was used: DIR (directive), STA (statement), QUE (asks question), ANS (answers question), COMP (compliant behavior), NONCOMP (noncompliant behavior), ENC (encouraging comment or behavior), AGR (agreement), DIS (disagreement), and REA (reads aloud). The reliability between the two coders at Time 2 was 91%. The four coders at Time 3 achieved an overall interrater

Table 2. Ethnic Group Differences in Mother-Child and Father-Child Dyadic Interactions at Time 3

	Mother-Child Dyads		*Father-Child Dyads*	
	Chinese American N = 31	*European American N = 36*	*Chinese American N = 30*	*European American N = 35*
Child Behaviors: Math Task				
Warmth (4 items αs = .60, .84)	4.76	4.94	4.87	5.10
Quiet control (3 items αs = .72, .64)	4.99	4.88	4.80	4.72
Self-reliance (3 items αs = .66, .77)	4.56	4.53	5.67	4.92**
Parent Behaviors: Math Task				
Warmth (7 items αs = .80, .83)	4.46	4.87**	4.38	4.69†
Clarity (2 items αs = .86, .80)	4.81	5.38*	4.88	5.29
Directiveness (3 items αs = .63, .53)	3.96	3.93	4.06	4.00
Child Behaviors: Puzzle Task				
Warmth (4 items αs = .78, .78)	4.66	4.93	4.61	4.91
Task involvement (3 items αs = .88, .92)	6.42	6.11	6.30	6.27
Self-reliance (2 items αs = .75, .76)	5.71	5.35	5.65	5.46
Optimism (3 items αs = .64, .61)	4.63	4.50	4.61	4.58
Parent Behaviors: Puzzle Task				
Warmth (3 items αs = .76, .81)	4.04	4.67***	4.09	4.61*
Task involvement (2 items αs = .74, .79)	5.08	5.69*	5.41	5.79
Patience (3 items αs = .82, .86)	5.68	5.74	5.33	5.92***
Optimism (3 items αs = .61, .56)	4.11	4.62**	4.40	4.61

Notes. Items were rated on a 7-point scale where each end of the scale represents a polar opposite.
†$p < .07$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

reliability of 87%. Differences were easily resolved. Bakeman and Quera's (1995) sequential analysis program was then used to compute conditional probabilities among parent and child speech acts separately for each ethnic group to reveal dyadic patterns involved in parental teaching.

RESULTS

Oneway (ethnicity) analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were used for ethnic group comparsons.

Time 1

When children were in preschool and kindergarten, Chinese American children (M = 35.32) scored significantly higher on the TEMA-2 than did European American children (M = 28.60), $F(1, 76) = 8.26$, $p < .01$. Chinese American parents (M = 3.87) were rated significantly higher on Directiveness than were European American parents (M = 3.57), F = 4.89, $p < .01$. European American parents (M = 4.87) were rated significantly higher on Clarity than were Chinese American parents (M = 4.27). The Clarity difference can probably be explained by the fact that most Chinese American parents spoke English in the videotapes, whereas their home language was Chinese. No differences were found on parental Warmth, nor on child scales of Quiet Control, Warmth, and Self-Reliance.

Time 2

Mathematics achievement. When children were in first and second grades, Chinese American children (M = 82.75) outscored European American children (M = 70.03) on the SAMI, $F(2, 72)$ –13.60, $p < .0001$.

Behavioral ratings in dyadic interactions. No ethnic group differences were found in parental scales of Directiveness, Warmth, or Clarity. No differences were found on the child scales of Quiet Control, Warmth, or Self-Reliance. The Chinese American interactions (M = 4.65 min.) lasted longer than did those of European American dyads (M = 3.73 min.), $F(1,68) = 4.54$, $p < .05$. Chinese American parents paid closer attention to what their child was writing (M = 5.76) and gave greater emphasis to the correct written form of the problem (M = 4.47) than did their European American counterparts (Ms = 5.30, 3.50), $Fs(1,64) = 4.42, 5.68$, $ps < .05$, respectively. Chinese American fathers (M = 5.60) were rated as sitting closer to their children than were European American fathers (M = 5.09), $F(1, 66) = 5.90$, $p = .05$.

Verbal participation in the mathematics task. The frequencies of the speech acts for each member of the mother-child and father-child dyads were tabulated and divided by the duration of the interaction, yielding a standardized measure called speech acts/minute. The speech acts/minute were analyzed using one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs). Ethnicity differences were found in verbal participation. As compared to Chinese American dyads,

European American mothers gave more directives and there were correspondingly more instances of child compliance (see Tables 3 and 4). European American mothers and fathers gave more encouraging comments to their children. European American fathers also used agreements to a greater extent than did Chinese American fathers. European American children gave more directives to their mothers and talked more in the interactions with fathers and with mothers than did Chinese American children.

Table 3. Time 2 Mother-Child Dyads: Ethnic Group Differences in Speech Acts/Minute

	Mothers			*Children*		
Speech Act	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*
Statement	3.93	3.55	.72	1.17	1.17	.00
Question	4.62	4.23	.32	.48	.66	1.57
Answer	.27	.39	1.03	2.22	2.68	2.25
Directive	1.53	2.30	6.00*	.02	.17	4.16*
Agreement	1.56	1.61	.05	.79	.81	.08
Compliant Behavior	.01	.04	1.18	.50	.88	6.44*
Non-Compliant Behavior	.01	.00	1.18	.03	.06	.69
Encouraging Comment	.36	.64	5.81*	.02	.03	.08
Disagreement	.49	.41	.36	.06	.09	.63
Reads Aloud	.36	.68	2.30	.58	.85	.88
Total Utterances	13.13	13.86	.50	5.86	7.40	5.25*

Notes. Ns = 32 Chinese-American dyads, 38 Euro-American dyads.
*$p < .05$.

Time 3

Mathematics achievement. When children were in third and fourth grades, Chinese American children ($M = 119.83$) maintained their mathematics superiority over European American children ($M = 100.32$) on the SAMI, $F(1,69) = 16.43$, $p < .0001$.

Behavioral ratings in dyadic interactions. In the parent-child interactions, European American mothers and fathers, respectively, were rated higher on Warmth than Chinese American parents on both tasks (see Table 2 for means). On the puzzle task, European American mothers were rated higher on Task Involvement and Optimism than were Chinese American mothers. European American fathers were rated higher on Patience than

Table 4. Time 2 Father-Child Dyads: Ethnic Group Differences in Speech Acts/Minute

	Fathers			*Children*		
Speech Act	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*
Statement	3.69	3.89	.09	1.02	.99	.00
Question	4.03	4.89	2.55	.45	.39	.34
Answer	.24	.26	.06	2.62	3.25	2.93†
Directive	1.86	2.15	.91	.08	.13	.84
Agreement	1.52	2.18	4.40*	.65	.98	2.25
Compliant Behavior	.01	.02	.18	.68	.95	2.09
Non-Compliant Behavior	.00	.01	.16	.09	.18	1.27
Encouraging Comment	.21	.67	5.37*	.03	.03	.00
Disagreement	.62	.62	.00	.10	.15	.37
Reads Aloud	.37	.32	.23	.44	.66	2.16
Total Utterances	12.58	15.04	3.39†	6.15	7.70	5.34*

Notes. *N*s = 31 Chinese-American dyads, 37 Euro-American dyads.
†$p < .10$. *$p < .05$.

were Chinese American fathers. The only significant child behavior difference was that Chinese American children were more Self-Reliant with their fathers in the mathematics task than were European American children. Chinese American parents ($M = 3.67$) were rated as paying greater attention to the correct written format of the problems than were European American parents ($M = 3.07$), $F(1,63) = 4.03$, $p < .05$. An examination of the mathematics problem papers showed that 77% of Chinese American dyads represented the problems using an orderly format, with numerals, decimal points, etc. aligned correctly, as compared to 54% of European American dyads. Thirty-one percent of the Chinese American parents and 18% of European American parents drew graphic representations to help their children understand. The mathematics interactions of Chinese American fathers and children ($M = 7.88$ minutes) were longer than those of the European American fathers ($M = 5.67$ minutes), $F(1,63) = 4.03$, $p < .05$. The interactions of Chinese American mothers ($M = 5.91$ minutes) and European American mothers ($M = 5.60$ minutes) did not differ in length.

Verbal participation in the mathematics task. The procedure explained above (Time 2) was used to calculate the rates of verbal participation. Ethnicity differences were found in verbal participation. In the mother-child interactions European American mothers made more statements, asked more questions, and talked more during the interaction than did Chinese

American mothers (see Table 5). European American mothers also answered more questions and made more encouraging comments, although these differences were marginally significant. European American children answered more questions, uttered more agreements, read aloud more, and talked more than Chinese American children. They also tended to give more directives to their mothers; however, this difference was marginally significant.

Table 5. Time 3 Mother-Child Dyads: Ethnic Group Differences in Speech Acts/Minute

	Mothers			*Children*		
Speech Act	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*
Statement	3.12	4.03	4.99*	1.21	1.69	2.23
Question	2.89	4.13	7.70**	.43	.64	2.68
Answer	.31	.48	3.24†	1.61	2.31	4.42*
Directive	2.09	2.17	.07	.09	.19	3.71†
Agreement	1.68	1.99	1.51	.33	.69	6.29*
Compliant Behavior	.01	.01	.00	.74	.80	.24
Non-Compliant Behavior	.00	.02	2.01	.06	.06	.03
Encouraging Comment	.27	.52	3.23†	.00	.02	1.93
Disagreement	.12	.21	2.20	.12	.21	2.20
Reads Aloud	.16	.12	.39	.20	.41	5.59*
Total Utterances	10.65	13.69	9.49**	4.79	7.02	9.58**

Notes. †$p < .07$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

In the father-child interactions, European American fathers asked more questions, made more encouraging comments, and talked more than did Chinese American fathers (see Table 6). European American children answered more questions and talked more than Chinese American children; however, the latter finding was marginally significant.

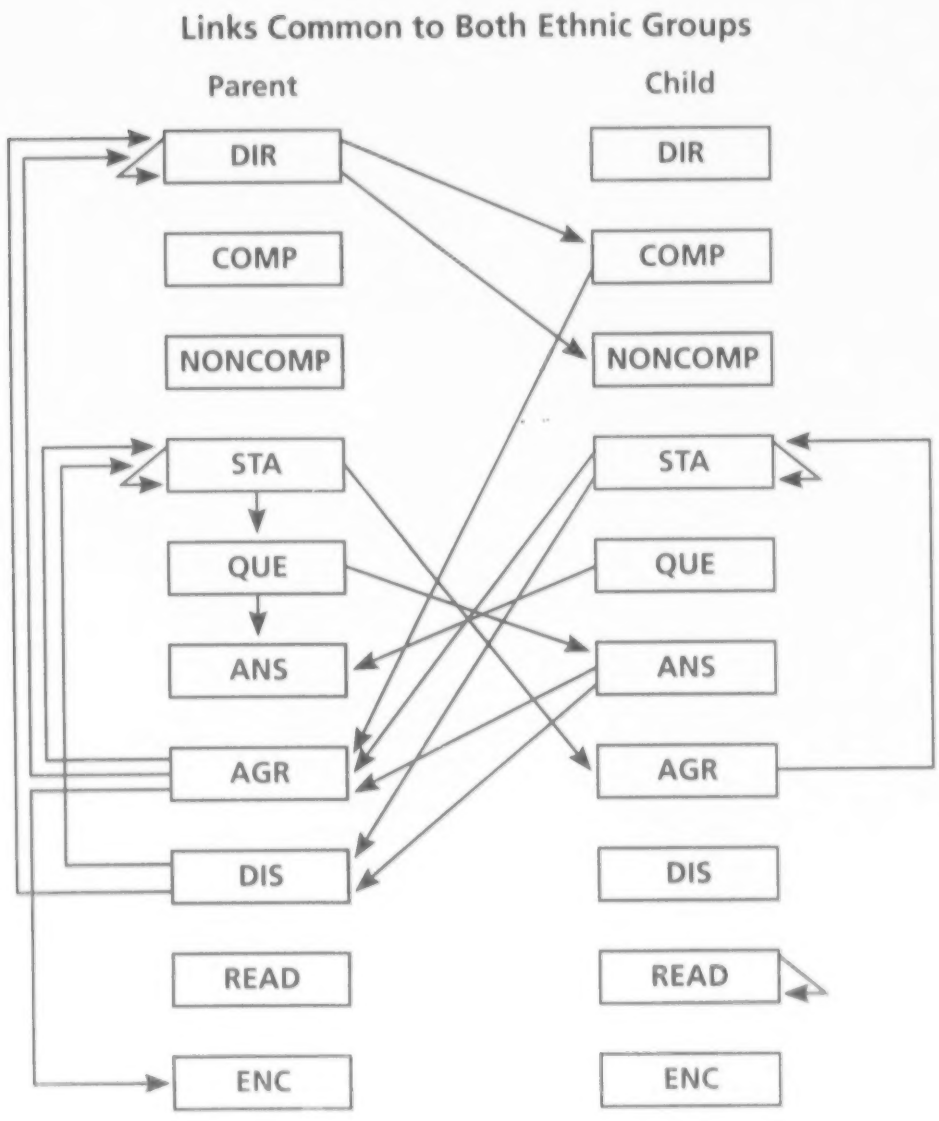
Table 6. Time 3 Father-Child Dyads: Ethnic Group Differences in Speech Acts/Minute

	Fathers			*Children*		
Speech Act	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*	*Chinese American*	*European American*	*F*
Statement	3.49	3.92	.93	1.30	1.43	.25
Question	2.99	4.12	11.23***	.48	.60	.74
Answer	.49	.44	.19	1.57	2.49	13.25***
Directive	1.63	1.68	.03	.13	.11	.09
Agreement	1.53	1.84	2.04	.42	.54	.74
Compliant Behavior	.02	.02	.01	.65	.68	.06
Non-Compliant Behavior	.02	.00	.77	.06	.07	.06
Encouraging Comment	.17	.46	10.27**	.00	.01	1.75
Disagreement	.65	.59	.18	.17	.19	.16
Reads Aloud	.06	.15	2.25	.28	.31	.13
Total Utterances	11.04	13.21	5.63*	5.06	6.43	3.45†

Notes. †$p < .07$. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$. ***$p < .001$.

Sequential lag results. The purpose of this analysis was to investigate ethnicity differences in the dyadic conversations of parents helping their children with mathematics problems. Jose (1988) has shown how dialogic patterns of communication can be empirically abstracted from conversation coded at the level of speech acts. The conversations are considered to be scripted rather than open-ended because parents were asked to help their child solve particular mathematics problems. We would expect, therefore, to find a high number of connections between sequential speech acts, for example, parent question followed by child answer. We examined only speech acts that were immediately sequential to each other (lag 1 connections). In this analysis using Bakeman and Quera's (1995) sequential analysis program, we combined mothers and fathers and grouped boys and girls together within the two ethnic groups. We looked only at the division created by ethnicity. Each reported lag 1 connection represents a significant conditional probability, $z > 2.57$, $p < .01$, between two sequential speech act categories. A significant probability occurs when obtained frequencies of pairs of acts exceeds that expected by chance. Also significant lag 1 connections with frequencies of fewer than 20 were not included because we wanted to report only the most common and robust patterns.

Chinese American dyads yielded 24 significant (at $p < .01$) lag 1 connections and European American dyads yielded 28. Twenty-two of the connections were common to both groups (see Figure 1). Examples are given



Note: An arrow between two acts denotes a significant ($p < .01$) conditional probability (i.e., the occurance of the second speech act after the first exceeds base probability). DIR = directive, COMP = compliant behavior, NONCOMP = noncompliant behavior, STA = statement, ANS = answer, AGR = agreement, DIS = disagreement, READ = reads aloud, ENC = encouraging comment

Figure 1. Speech act contingencies common to dyads in both ethnic groups at Time 3.

below for the ten most frequently occurring significant sequential structures (lag 1 connections) common to both groups, and for the links unique to each group. Frequencies of occurrence are reported in parentheses.

Regarding *parent to child links in both groups*, the significant lag 1 connections were:

1. Parent question followed by child answer (EA = 880 occurrences, CA = 586 occurrences);

> **Dad**: What is this four times eight?
> **Jeremy**: Four times eight is thirty-two.

2. Parent directives followed by child compliance (EA = 233, CA = 205);

> **Dad**: Show me a yard—put your hands apart three feet.
> **Jay**: (Puts his hands about three feet apart.)

3. Parent statements followed by child agreements (EA = 129, CA = 82);

> (Mom is working the problem on paper.)
> **Mom**: The decimal point would go here. (points)
> **Chris**: Okay. (Looks at Mom.)

4. Parent directives followed by child noncompliance (EA = 24, CA = 21).

In *European American dyads only*, parent answers were followed by child agreements (EA = 24) (see Figure 2).

> **Katie**: What do you mean?
> **Mom**: (Writing as she talks) If you took 12 and you divide it by 2/3, it's the same thing as 12 times 3 halves.
> **Katie**: Okay.

Regarding *parent to parent links in both groups*, the significant lag 1 connections were:

1. Parent statement followed by parent statement (EA = 562, CA = 580);

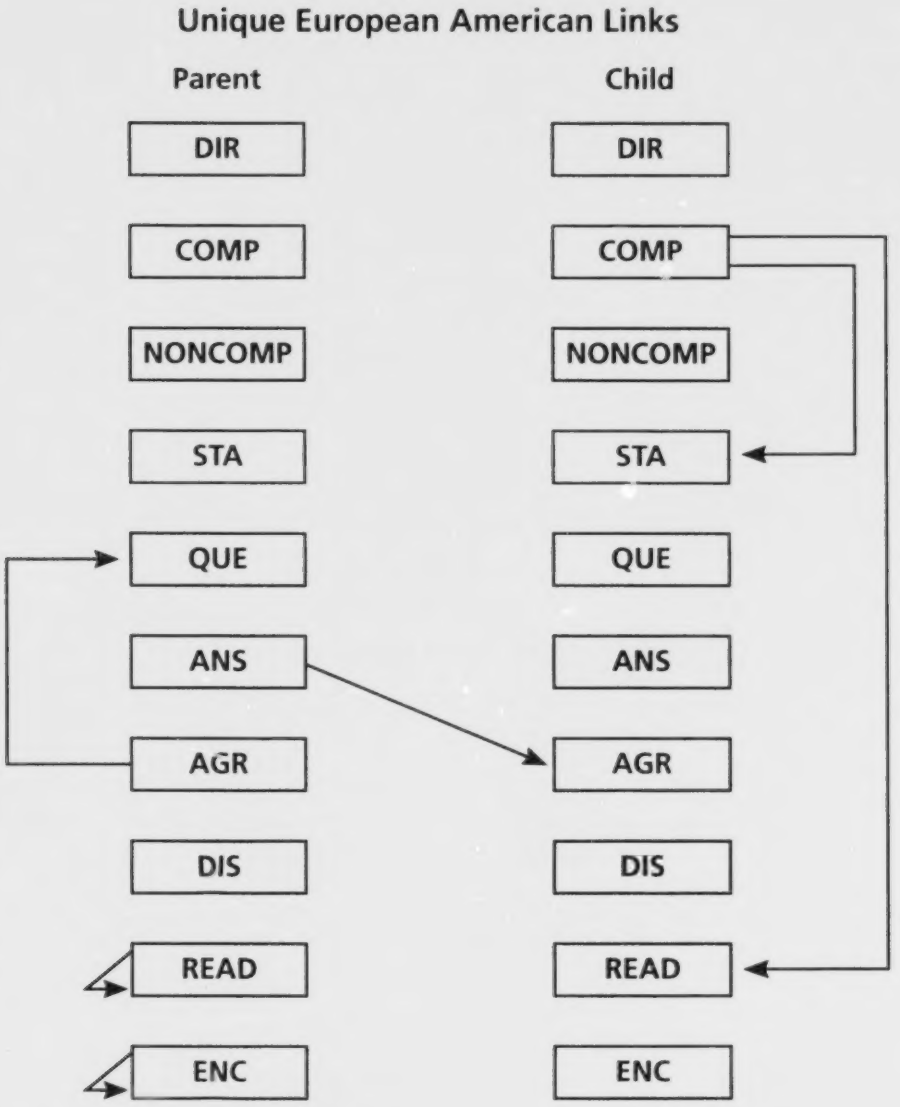
> **Mom**: You know the rule now. You, you times if it's multiplication.

2. Parent statements followed by parent questions (EA = 425, CA = 432);

> **Mom**: You've got this pile of money and you got twelve months. What do I have to do with this money to put the same amount in each month?

3. Parent directives followed by parent directives (EA = 118, CA = 111);

> **Mom**: Here you try to do this. You try to solve 7 1/4 divided by 1 1/4.



Note: An arrow between two acts denotes a significant ($p < .01$) conditional probability (i.e., the occurance of the second speech act after the first exceeds base probability). DIR = directive, COMP = compliant behavior, NONCOMP = noncompliant behavior, STA = statement, ANS = answer, AGR = agreement, DIS = disagreement, READ = reads aloud, ENC = encouraging comment

Figure 2. Speech act contingencies unique to European American dyads at Time 3.

4. Parent agreements followed by parent statements (EA = 209, CA = 195);

> **Mom**: Okay. So this is right. (Takes pencil.) You covered these. Now you know you have 21 boxes.

5. Parent agreements followed by parent directives (EA = 119, CA = 136);

   Dad: Okay. So you have to subtract one from the other.

6. Parent questions followed by parent answers (EA = 61, CA = 60);
7. Parent agreements followed by parent encouragements (EA = 42, CA = 26);
8. Parent disagreements followed by parent directives (EA = 35, CA = 42); and
9. Parent disagreements followed by parent statements (EA = 87, CA = 87).

In *European American dyads only*, the following connections occurred:

1. Parent agreements were followed by parent questions (EA = 176);

   Mike: You divide.
   Mom: All right. How much did he make in a whole year?

2. Parents read aloud two successive times (EA = 22);

   Dad: (Reading) Mr. Weller runs 4 days each week. He runs 3.4 miles each day.

3. Parents gave two successive encouraging comments (EA = 26). Two examples follow:

   Mom: Super! 2/9. Excellent! Excellent! Excellent!
   Mom: Good. Cool. Okay, we've got that down!

In *Chinese American dyads only*, parent encouragements were followed by parent directives (CA = 20) (see Figure 3). An example:

Dad: Okay. Good. (Gives Irene new paper.)
D: Read this first.

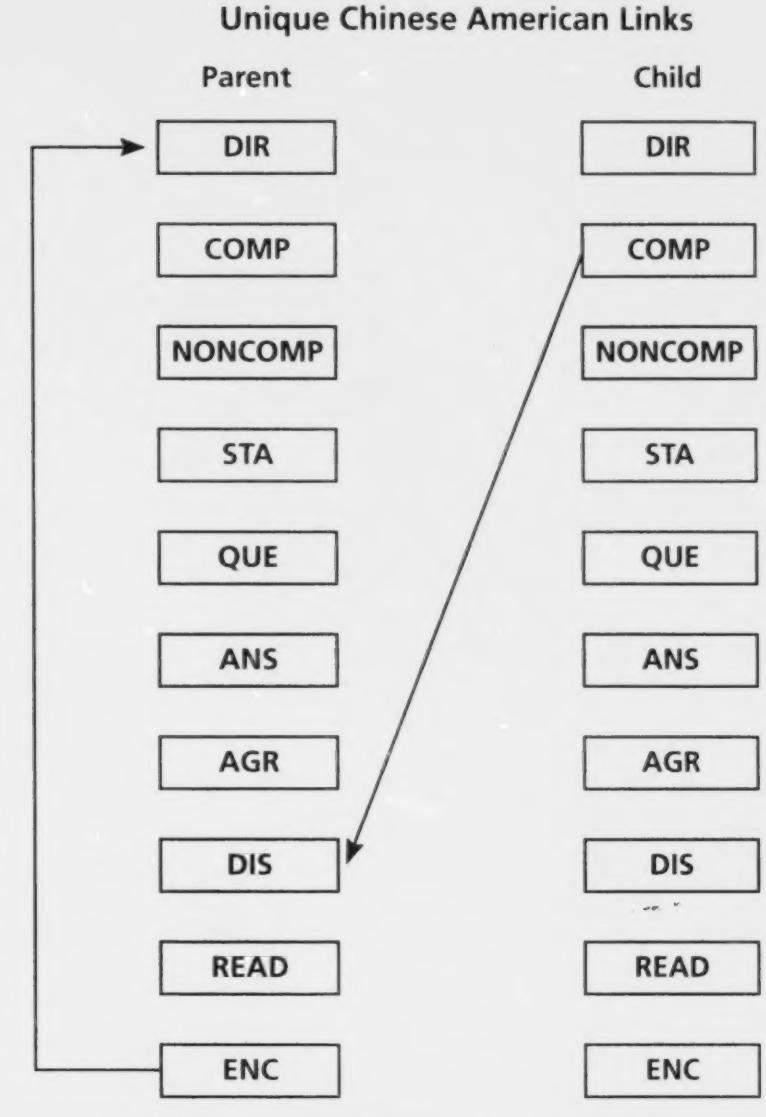
Regarding *child to parent links in both groups*,

1. Child statements were followed by parent agreement (EA = 125, CA = 118);

   Jenny: And then you get 20 cents.
   Dad: Right.

2. Child answers were followed by parent agreement (EA = 304, CA = 223);

   Mom: So what kind of a problem is that?
   Maggie: Subtraction
   Mom: Yes.



Note: An arrow between two acts denotes a significant ($p < .01$) conditional probability (i.e., the occurance of the second speech act after the first exceeds base probability). DIR = directive, COMP = compliant behavior, NONCOMP = noncompliant behavior, STA = statement, ANS = answer, AGR = agreement, DIS = disagreement, READ = reads aloud, ENC = encouraging comment

Figure 3. Speech act contingencies unique to Chinese American dyads at Time 3

3. Child statements were followed by parent disagreement (EA = 51, CA = 46);
4. Child questions were followed by parent answers (EA = 103, CA = 91);

5. Child answers were followed by parent disagreement (EA = 76, CA = 55); and
6. Child compliance was followed by parent agreement (EA = 56, CA = 80).

In the *Chinese American dyads only*, child compliance was followed by parent disagreement (CA = 21). An example follows:

Mom: You explain to me how you got that.
Alan: Because 3 and 23/100 plus 2 and 33/100
Mom: (interrupting) It's not 23/100. It's 2/3 of a pound.

Regarding the *child to child links* in both groups,

1. Child statements were followed by child statements (EA = 122, CA = 61);
2. Child agreements were followed by child statements (EA = 47, CA = 31); and
3. Children read aloud twice in succession (EA = 67, CA = 43).

In the *European American group only*,

1. Child compliance was followed by child statements (EA = 36);

Mom: You start and when you have trouble, I'll help you.
James: (Begins to work the problem on paper.) Three times six is six.

2. Child compliance was followed by child reading aloud (EA = 21), as in the following example:

Mom: Okay. You read it first.

Katie: A team practiced for 7 1/2 hours. Each practice lasted 1 1/4 hours.

In addition, an examination of the content of the transcripts showed that Chinese American parents focused on concentration and neatness. Several examples follow:

Dad: Concentrate on this.
Mom: Think about this.
Mom: Oh, Cindy, be neat.
Mom: Write 1/3 nicely—like this.
Dad: That's wrong. If you lined it up proper—Next time try to line them up proper.

There were qualitative differences, also, regarding the directness of parental disagreement with their child's answers. Chinese American parents were more likely to correct their children's work in a direct manner, whereas European American parents often were more indirect, perhaps sacrificing clarity.

European American

Brian: Okay. Seven thirty-eight minus two forty-two.
Mom: But that's 7 and 3/8, okay?

Chinese American

Dad: Do fractions like I told you. (Checks paper.) No, Emily, that's not right.

DISCUSSION

The parent-child interactions of the Chinese American and European American families revealed many similarities. Our hypothesis that Chinese American parents would be more directive overall than their European American counterparts was not supported. Chinese American parents at Time 1 were rated as more directive when teaching an informal mathematics game to their children; however, at Times 2 and 3, when the mathematics task was more structured, Chinese American and European American parents were rated as similar in directiveness. At Time 2, European American mothers gave significantly more directives to their children, so the evidence for greater directiveness on the part of Chinese American parents is mixed. It may be that Chinese American parents are more directive when a task is unstructured, as we observed when the children were younger.

At Times 1 and 3, European American parents were rated as having greater clarity in their teaching. The major explanatory factor is probably that Chinese American parents were speaking in English, which is their second language. When they teach their child at home, they often use Chinese. It may also be that more of the communication in the Chinese American dyads was nonverbal and therefore, not as clear to the raters (even though one of the pair of raters at each time was an immigrant Chinese American mother).

At Time 3 European American parents were rated significantly higher on warmth on both the puzzle and mathematics tasks than were Chinese American parents. This observation corroborates other research that has demonstrated the tendency for immigrant Chinese Americans to be more restrained in the expression of affection (Uba, 1994). Cultural values which emphasize self-control and Confucian teachings which advise fathers

that too much emotion hinders teaching and learning (Ho, 1986) probably contribute to this phenomenon. In addition, Chinese parents traditionally are more indulgent (and therefore, perhaps, more expressive) with their younger children and become more strict over time with their older children (e.g., Chiu, 1987; Papousek & Papousek, 1991). In contrast, European Americans tend to believe that family members should openly and directly express affection for each other (Uba, 1994). It is interesting to note that, although Chinese American parents were observed to be less warm, the children in the two groups were not rated as significantly different in warmth.

Rating a construct like "warmth" across cultures is problematic. Although all humans probably experience feelings, cultures differ in their definitions of appropriate ways to display emotions (Saarni, 1998). Facial expressions and gestures may have different affective meanings in the two cultures we studied. Amy Tan (1989) makes that point vividly when she writes that Chinese mothers show their affection for their children "not by hugs and kisses, but with stern offerings of steamed dumplings, duck's gizzards, and crab" (p. 202). Because we wanted to be as culturally sensitive as possible, we engaged two immigrant Chinese American mothers from the community (not graduate students) to discuss the meanings of the items before the videotapes were coded. At Time 1 these two Chinese American mothers rated all the videotapes. There was very high agreement (greater than 90% on all items) between the two Chinese American raters. One of the Time 1 Chinese American coders also rated the videotapes at Time 2 and Time 3. It seems important to clarify that our scale did not rate warmth, per se, but rather, outward manifestations of warmth common in Western cultures.

In the puzzle task, parents in both groups were rated high in Task Involvement; however, European American mothers were rated higher than Chinese American mothers. This may also be a reflection of the Chinese belief in restraint of emotional expression. Chinese American mothers outwardly appeared to be less highly involved. Parents in both ethnic groups were rated fairly high in patience; however, European American fathers were rated as higher in patience than Chinese American fathers.

At Time 3 European American dyads used a parent question-child answer interactional pattern to a greater extent than did Chinese American dyads. This corroborates our predictions, based on Greenfield and Suzuki's (1998) cultural model of parent-child relations, that parents whose child socialization goal is independence will ask questions at a high rate to encourage verbalization from the child. European American parents made greater use of praise (encouraging comments) at both Times 2 and 3 than did Chinese American parents, supporting our predictions and replicating the results of our earlier study of fifth and sixth graders (Huntsinger & Jose, 1995). Children in individualist cultures consider tasks as

their individual accomplishment for which they expect praise and compliments. There is less need for positive reinforcement when the intrinsic worth of the work is evident (Whiting & Whiting, 1975). In the interdependent Chinese family, the belief in the importance of academic achievement is shared by all and high academic achievement is expected, rather than chosen. Children achieve for their family, not for themselves.

Our prediction that Chinese American interactions would be of longer duration was supported. At both Times 2 and 3 the Chinese American dyads spent a greater amount of time in problem solving. Parents tended to go beyond the problems they were given and to create additional problems for their child, thus reinforcing the mathematics learning. Chinese American parents also paid more attention to the written representation of the problem at both Times 2 and 3. Greater emphasis on "showing your work" in an orderly manner probably helped the child to be careful regarding the format of mathematics problems. Chinese American children had more practice in the proper alignment of numerals, decimal points, and signs, thus helping to avoid errors that are a result of carelessness.

The fact that Chinese American dyads had significantly fewer verbalizations per minute means that there was a greater amount of quiet time in the interactions. Wagner and Phillips (1992) speculated that a child engaged in solving problems may be more focused if she or he is less talkative and less emotionally expressive. The Chinese American children, having higher competence in mathematics, may have been able to work more independently. Perhaps they communicated less with their parents because they needed less help. Chinese parents, reflecting Confucian doctrine, have traditionally emphasized the role of mental concentration in academic achievement (Hess, et al., 1987). Parents may have been giving their children more time to think. In fact, several Chinese American parents directed their children to concentrate during the course of the interactions.

At Time 2 European American children disagreed with their parents to a greater extent than did the Chinese American children. At both Times 2 and 3, European American children talked more and gave their mothers more directives than did Chinese American children. When Chinese American children were given a directive by their parents, they usually complied by writing. When they wrote something incorrectly, parents corrected them (disagreement). When European American children were given a directive, they complied, but also made a statement. In the United States children are taught to be assertive and to speak their minds, whereas, historically Chinese children have been expected to be respectful and obedient to parents (Gow, Balla, Kember, & Hau, 1996; Greenfield & Suzuki, 1998). In fact, a talkative Chinese American child might be labeled a problem child in a traditional Chinese home (Uba, 1994).

These Chinese American children became more self-reliant than European American children in doing mathematics over the primary school years. It may be that the greater amount of practice on mathematics and the more systematic teaching of mathematics to children in early childhood provide children with a stronger basic foundation on which to build later mathematics skill (Huntsinger, Jose, Larson, Krieg, & Shaligram, 2000). With a stronger foundation, children develop confidence in their ability to master mathematical challenges. In guided participation in the Vygotskian sense, the expert (parent) gradually gives increasing responsibility to the learner (child) over time so that she or he can learn more independently.

There are several limitations of this study. First, the children came from two-parent, middle class, college-educated families. We cannot generalize the results to families from other sociocultural contexts. Second, our sample is rather small. Larger samples would enable researchers to use more sophisticated analytical techniques (i.e., structural equation modeling) to evaluate the multiple factors involved in mathematics achievement. Third, the Chinese American children studied in this research were all children of immigrant parents. We cannot generalize our findings to second, third, or fourth generation Chinese American families in the United States. Fourth, the interactions are of rather short duration. Future research should look at parents helping children with their homework for longer periods of time.

When comparing Chinese American and European American family interactional patterns, we do not assume that all individuals in the same culture are alike. We recognize that there is individual variation within each group. However, because the members of each group were raised within a particular cultural context, they are more likely to share some behavioral patterns with other members of their group than with members of the contrasting group.

The descriptive data in this study conform to Greenfield and Suzuki's (1998) cultural model of parent-child relations and add to our knowledge of the cultural contexts of education. This is a first step toward making a connection between what parents actually do with their children and their children's mathematics achievement. Our data suggest that there are features of Chinese American parental teaching that may be linked to their children's higher achievement, but it will be up to future research to explore those linkages. The mathematics achievement of children as a whole in the United States is much poorer than it should be, given the abundant resources of this country. If we can determine the ingredients of effective parental teaching by looking at families with high achieving children, then parents can be taught how to support their children's learning of mathematics beginning with the early childhood years.

APPENDIX A

Child Scales: Math Task

Rating = 7	Rating = 1
Warmth (Cronbach's alphas = .60, .84)	
Emotionally very expressive	Emotionally very unexpressive.
Warm toward parent.	Irritated, impatient with parent.
Respectful of parent	Hostile toward parent.
Visibly enjoys interaction with parent.	Appears to have an unpleasant time.
Quiet-Control (Cronbach's alphas = .72, .64)	
Sits very still	Moves around a lot.
Intense concentration	Easily distracted.
Whispers, soft-spoken with parent.	Loud, assertive with parent.
Shy, inhibited	Very talkative/responsive
Self-Reliance (Cronbach's alphas = .66, .77)	
Self-directed	Waits for parent to lead
Expresses/uses own ideas for solving problem	Offers no ideas of his/her own
Child makes much use of pencil to help in solution	Child does not use pencil at all

APPENDIX B

Parent Scales: Math Task

Rating = 7	Rating = 1
Warmth (Cronbach's alphas = .80, .83)	
Enjoys interaction with child.	Irritated, impatient with child.
Gives approval frequently	Gives approval rarely
Warm, loving relationship with child.	Cool, reserved in relationship with child.
Light-hearted, not serious.	Serious
Emotionally expressive.	Emotionally unexpressive.
Sits close to child	Sits stiffly or at a distance
Deeply involved/interested	Shows little interest or involvement
Directive (Cronbach's alphas = .63, .53)	
Tells child how to do problem.	Expects child to come up with own solution
Gives child time to think and ask questions.	Proceeds rapidly and does the majority of the talking
Corrects child's errors quickly and directly	Is hesitant to address child's errors

Clarity (Cronbach's alphas = .86, .80)

Explanation is clear to child.	Explanation is confusing to child.
Organized in approach.	Disorganized in approach.

APPENDIX C

Child Scales: Puzzle Task

Rating = 7	Rating = 1

Warmth (Cronbach's alphas = .78, .78)

Talkative with parent	Reserved with parent
Emotionally very expressive	Emotionally very unexpressive
Enjoys interaction with parent	Does not appear to enjoy interaction
Respectful of parent	Hostile to parent

Task Involvement (Cronbach's alphas = .88, .92)

Intense concentration	Easily distracted
Persistent	Gives up easily
Highly interested in task	Not interested in task

Self-Reliance (Cronbach's alphas = .75,.76)

Very confident	Unsure
Self-directed	Waits for parents lead

Optimism (Cronbach's alphas = .64, .61)

Makes encouraging comments	Makes discouraging comments
Optimistic	Pessimistic
Remains unruffled, calm	Displays frustration

APPENDIX D

Parent Scales: Puzzle Task

Rating = 7	**Rating = 1**

Warmth (Cronbach's alphas = .76, .81)

Openly enthusiastic	Reserved with child
Light-hearted, playful	Very serious, sober
Greatly enjoys interaction with child	Does not appear to enjoy child

Task Involvement (Cronbach's alphas = .74, .79)

Highly involved in task	Not involved in task
Very interested	Uninterested

Patience (Cronbach's alphas = .82, .86)

Very patient with child	Very impatient with child
Gentle with child	Harsh with child
Remains unperturbed, "laid back"	Gets visibly frustrated

Optimism (Cronbach's alphas = .61, .56)

Encouraging	Discouraging
Very confident	Very unsure, tentative
Emotionally very expressive	Emotionally very unexpressive

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NOTE

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CHAPTER 6

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF CHINESE AMERICAN FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN YOUNG CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Sau-Fong Siu

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 20 years enough evidence about the critical role of the family in student achievement (Henderson & Berla, 1994) has been amassed that *Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994* (National Educational Goals Panel, 1995) decided to include family-school-community partnerships as one of the eight national goals. In a multicultural society such as the United States, building these partnerships can be an enormous challenge. Certain family processes identified in research studies as important to school success seem to lose their explanatory power when applied to Asian Americans (Dornbusch & Wood, 1989; Holloway, 1990; Schneider & Lee, 1990). For example, whereas parental attendance at school functions, involving children in mealtime conversations, and having an authoritative rather than authoritarian parenting style is correlated with White and Black students' school success, these factors seem to have little or no bearing on the performance of Asian American students. It is clear that Asian American

parents support of their children's learning takes forms that are quite different from those of parents from other ethnic and cultural groups. "Asian American," however, is a term that embraces a large number of ethnic groups. There is a need to identify patterns of family involvement in education in each Asian ethnic group.

A comprehensive review of the research literature on home-school partnerships finds that Chinese American parent involvement in education is largely uncharted territory, ripe for exploration (Hidalgo, Bright, Siu, Swap, & Epstein, 1995). First, more is known about parental involvement in the home than about parental involvement in the school or in the community. Second, almost no data exists on the effects of different degrees and types of involvement on educational achievement. Finally, more is known about the involvement of Chinese parents born overseas than about American-born Chinese parents, primarily because research access is made easier by the concentration of Chinese immigrants in Chinatowns. Little is known about parent involvement patterns of Chinese Americans who are scattered in suburban communities and whose children are not enrolled in bilingual programs. A recent work on Asian parents and the US public schools, appropriately titled *Unfamiliar Partners* (Te, Cordova, Walker-Moffat, & First, 1997), does not include information on Chinese parents in the school; instead, it focuses on Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, Filipino, and Hmong parents relationships with schools.

PURPOSE

The study, designed as a longitudinal and ethnographic one, was conducted to fill a gap in the literature. The purpose is to provide in-depth knowledge of families of Chinese American children who are not in bilingual programs, who are in suburban as well as urban schools: how these families support their children's school success in the early grades (kindergarten through second grade), how their views and practices change over time, and what involvement in education means to them. From primary data collected on family strengths, values about education, and patterns of interactions with their children, school, and community, hypotheses were developed regarding Chinese American family involvement with education, to be tested by quantitative studies using large samples. The ultimate objective is to provide useful information to teachers and school administrators who desire to establish more effective home-school partnerships with a spectrum of Chinese American families.

METHODOLOGY

Kindergarten teachers of monolingual classrooms of urban and suburban schools in a metropolitan area on the East Coast were asked to identify Chinese American children who showed unusual promise for academic and social success. (All these children continued to do well in first grade and second grade, according to the teachers and school records.) Once the children were identified, access to families was facilitated through school personnel, and in some cases also through connections in community-based agencies whom the parents trusted.

Data collection took place over a period of three years for five families and two years for the remaining five. There was no sample attrition despite relocation and switching schools in two cases. Multimethod data collection consisted of annual interviews with the child's teachers; reviewing school records; observations of the child in the classroom and/or during recess as well as at home; interviews with the child in and out of the home; interviews with the parents and other family members in and out of the home. Settings of family interviews and observations included homes, public schools, summer programs, museums, public libraries, skating rinks, Chinese language schools, neighborhood playgrounds, parents offices, and neighborhood music schools. The first-year family interview guide included open-ended questions to explore how parents and grandparents see their child, their definition of success, their concepts of their community, their views of teachers and schools, how they interpret their role in supporting their child's learning, their perceptions of their status in the United States, and the family's history of immigration, if applicable. Additional questions were added in subsequent years to seek clarification of data initially collected, to check out preliminary hypotheses, and to determine changes in the child and family members over the course of the study. Home observations focusing on how family members used time, space, and interactions to support learning augmented data collected through interviews.

The length of each visit to the family ranged from one to four hours. Fathers, mothers, and grandparents participated in interviews although the mother was the primary informant in all families. Interviews were conducted in English, Cantonese, or Putonghua (Mandarin) depending on the person's preference. The number of contacts with families ranged from 5 to 12, with an average of eight. All interviews with teachers, children, and family members were taped and all tapes transcribed. These transcripts and the author's field notes were analyzed using the software "Ethnograph."

SAMPLE

The study included ten Chinese American families. All the children were born in the United States, but the parents were recent immigrants, long time immigrants, and American-born Chinese. Of the 20 parents, 12 were U.S. citizens, 5 of whom were born in this country. The 15 parents who were immigrants entered the country as teens or adults. Their length of stay in the United States ranged from 6 to 30 years.

The ten families had varying income levels as well as differing extents of acculturation. English was the exclusive language used in three families, Cantonese in five families, Mandarin in one, and a mixture of Cantonese and English in one. Three children had no siblings and two were first-borns. All children in the sample came from "intact" families with two parents. Parental educational level ranged from sixth grade to doctorate. There was also a wide range of occupations of parents, from restaurant worker to lawyer and physician. In all but two families, both parents held outside jobs. Two families were considered low income because they met the eligibility requirement for the free or reduced school lunch program. One of these families lived in public housing. No family in the sample was receiving public assistance.

This diverse sample afforded the author a rare opportunity to gain a deep understanding of how Chinese American families approach education. The drawback of limited generalizability due to small sample size was offset by the richness of the data obtained from family interviews and observations.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The ethnographic study has yielded many findings, some of which are listed below:

- Chinese American parents are involved in different ways to help their children succeed in school so that one cannot speak of "the" pattern of Chinese American parental involvement with education.
- Patterns of involvement are a function of many factors, such as the school's effort to involve families, parents' length of stay in the United States, their extent of acculturation, their familiarity with the U.S. school system, and their perception of their status in the United States;
- Language is not the only barrier to parents' active participation in the schools. Other factors are unfamiliarity with the school structure,

discomfort with an active parental role in the school building, and conflicts with work schedules;

- Parents who care deeply about their children's education but who do not participate actively in school functions and policymaking bodies can and do have children who succeed in school;
- Regardless of socioeconomic class and place of birth, Chinese American families use a variety of community resources, both formal and informal, to support their children's learning. Older siblings, grandparents, and other extended family members may play significant roles in fostering school success in children.
- There is sometimes disagreement between teachers and Chinese American parents about how much academic work is appropriate for young children and what the ideal home-school partnership is like.
- Official parent information centers offered by the public school system are less appealing to Chinese American parents than informal networks, and this is true even for parents who can speak English.

The within-group differences are particularly interesting because the different patterns of involvement cannot be neatly and totally explained by the usual categories: high versus low income, immigrant status versus American-born status, urban versus suburban. One clear theme that has emerged from the data is that patterns of family involvement with education vary according to the parents perception of their status in the United States (how secure). Based on this theme, the author proposes a typology of three patterns of Chinese American family involvement with education. These patterns lie on a continuum. Pattern I seems to be characteristic of those Chinese American families in which at least one parent was born in the United States and has gone through the American educational system. These parents are familiar with how schools operate in the United States and they perceive themselves as successful in school and/or career. For lack of a better term, Pattern I will be referred to as "highly secure," Pattern II, as "moderately secure," and Pattern III, as "tenuously secure." Pattern III is exhibited by those families in which both parents are immigrants who completed their schooling overseas and do not perceive themselves to have achieved success or security in a socioeconomic sense. Between the two poles of Pattern I and Pattern III lies Pattern II. When parents are immigrants who received their earlier schooling overseas, but also attended school in the United States, they tend to display ambivalence in their views as well as practices, perhaps reflecting a strong desire to strike a balance between the traditional Chinese way and the mainstream American pattern of involvement with the child's education.

Three families in the sample can be classified as Pattern I, three as Pattern III, and four as Pattern II. In keeping with a qualitative research

approach, this study was concerned with meaning and perception of the informants. Thus, words such as "success" and "security" refer only to the parents' self-description or perceptions of success and security, and not to any objective measure (such as income and ownership of a house) or the author's judgment of a family's sense of psychological security. In one case, the father explicitly states that his anxiety about the precarious status is not only about his family but about all Chinese in America. An anti-Chinese movement like the one in the late nineteenth century could wipe out everything he and other Chinese has worked hard for.

A discussion of the differences between Pattern I "highly secure," Pattern II "moderately secure" and Pattern III "tenuously secure" families will revolve around nine areas of beliefs and practices: (a) the meaning of and ingredients for success; (b) perception of parental role in education; (c) expectations and rationale for schooling and extracurricular activities; (d) planning and obtaining information about schools; (e) monitoring homework and promoting literacy; (f) school involvement and parental assertiveness; (g) socialization toward functioning in a multicultural society; (h) attention to the child's social-emotional development, and (i) the family in the context of the community.

The Meaning of and Ingredients for Success

All fathers in the three families classified as Pattern III "tenuously secure" have not had college education and are employed in the food industry, two as waiters in Chinese restaurants and one as a cook in a well-known chain hotel. Success to one father means "having your head sticking out above others," a Chinese idiom roughly equivalent to the English word "outstanding." In practical terms, this means graduating from college and holding a steady, well-respected professional job. Similarly, a mother defines success as self-reliant and financially secure. In her mind, financial security can come only with a college education and a high status occupation. Using these definitions of success, these parents do not consider themselves to be successful. In contrast, all six parents in the three Pattern I "highly secure" families have bachelors' degrees from U.S. institutions and five also hold master's or doctoral degrees. As professionals, they consider themselves successful. For them, education is definitely a critical component of success for their children, but they also stress other personal and interpersonal qualities. For example, in one family, a successful person is someone who is happy and likable, able to get along with others, and is financially self-sufficient through holding a professional, practical job. Pattern II "moderately secure" parents have a range of educational backgrounds, from less than high school to a doctorate, but their definition of

success is closer to that of Pattern I "highly secure" parents in that being happy and sociable is more important than financial success or a prestigious occupation. One couple with doctorates defines success as a part of mainstream society, which they do not consider themselves to be despite their high educational achievement.

When asked about the essential ingredient for success in life, virtually all parents in the sample cite "hard work." Innate ability is considered necessary but insufficient.

Parental Perception of Their Roles in Education

Concerned about the American public school's general laxness, Pattern III "tenuously secure" parents view their role as supplementing what the school is doing and filling in the gaps. They are clear about their responsibility—to teach the child the skills they believe are needed for the child to successfully compete and come out ahead. For example, in one Pattern III family, driven by the belief that there is one correct path, the parents focus the child's attention on this path, which they refer to as *kwai doe* (equivalent to the English word track). The parents see their responsibility as one of guiding the child through a path that leads to greater likelihood for success. This guiding manifests itself in a number of ways—teaching the child how to hold a pencil before he entered kindergarten, choosing his activities carefully, and signing him up for Kumon math workshops. In another Pattern III family, the parents regularly make up extra homework to supplement what is lacking in the school. All three Pattern III families supply a variety of equipment and materials to help ensure their children's success in school: workbooks, electronic dictionary with the capacity to pronounce the word, an electronic "learning" machine that teaches subtraction and addition, flash cards, a special gadget to help a young child hold a pencil.

Pattern I or "highly secure" parents conceptualize their role in education quite differently. For example, one mother sees her role as keeping informed about the school's curriculum and operations, getting to know the teachers, monitoring their children's progress, and speaking up to ensure that the child's needs are met. This means deep and regular involvement in the school as a classroom or library volunteer, decision-maker, and observer. Whereas "tenuously secure" parents tend to refer to the correct path and the need to make a financial investment in education, "highly secure" parents emphasize their role as "being there for the children."

Like "tenuously secure" parents, Pattern II "moderately secure" also see their role as filling in the gap left by the teachers, for example, in assigning extra homework when there is insufficient homework from school. However, they are less driven than are Pattern III parents. For example, the Pat-

tern II parents who buy workbooks and computer software for their children tend to leave their use up to the children.

Expectations and Rationale for Schooling and Extracurricular Activities

The differences between "highly secure" parents and "tenuously secure" parents are quite pronounced when it comes to expectations for their children. Not surprisingly, all parents hope their children will attend college and none will "force" their children to go. However, "highly secure" parents seem to have less specific academic and career goals for their children. When asked about her expectations of her son, one American-born mother says, "To be happy, to be well adjusted, to get along with other people. [I have] no particular professional goals for him." She will be very open to her son going into fields other than medicine, science, and engineering. Another mother, a professional woman born in the United States to immigrant parents, expresses a similar sentiment, "I guess my view is that when Dennis is going through school, if he's not all A's, I won't make him feel like he screwed up. ... For me it's important that he gets along with the other kids, because I remember not always feeling like I fit in when I was growing up ... A big thing for me is just he has to get along with the kids, he has to feel like he's comfortable."

In contrast, "tenuously secure" parents typically state their expectations this way, "Attend a good school, get all A's, get into college, find a steady job and earn a decent living." Doctor, engineer, computer scientist, or researcher are frequently named as "acceptable" professions.

Noting the differences between Chinese immigrant parents and those born in the United States, a mother in a "highly secure" family, offers this observation: "My generation, being third generation, there wasn't a big emphasis that we be mathematicians or engineers or whatever from my parents. I think that after ethnic or racial groups have been here a long time they will do whatever. The other thing is that because I came from the West Coast, there are a lot more Asians there and you see them in a lot of professions where there is not much of a stereotype if people have been there five or six generations."

For "tenuously secure" families, class rank and grades take on great significance even in the early grades, as shown by the parents counting and keeping track of the number of "1," "2," and "3" ratings on their children's report" cards. This behavior is rarely seen in the "highly secure" families. Prompted by a belief that the kind of tests and the kind of grading in the early grades are arbitrary, one American-born father does not attach much significance to the grades on the report card at all.

"Highly secure" and "tenuously secure" parents also give different rationales for schooling. For the latter, schooling is primarily a tool for achieving socioeconomic success. Some of those parents will use themselves as negative examples to impress upon the child that if she does not study hard and go on to college, she will end up like her parents. Contrast this with the rationale given by the Pattern I parents. A typical comment is, "When my child goes to school, he has social interaction with other kids." The school is thus valuable as a place that provides an opportunity to make and keep friends. A college degree is seen more as an opportunity for personal enrichment than a meal ticket or a way to please the parents.

The "tenuously secure" parents utilitarian view and the "highly secure" parents' developmental view spill over to extracurricular activities as well as formal schooling. For example, in one Pattern III family, most of the child's after-school activities have been chosen with future success in mind, either augmenting the school's regular academic program (e.g., Kumon math workshops), or providing an additional skill that could give him a competitive edge in the future (e.g., lessons in Mandarin). By no means is the author suggesting here that "tenuously secure" parents always ignore their children's interests, but the parents clearly play a big part in initiating activities. For Pattern I "highly secure" families, the parental view of the child's extracurricular activities revolves around enjoyment and socialization. Even at a young age, children in these families get to choose the activities they want to be involved in.

The expectations for their children and rationale for schooling reported by Pattern II "moderately secure" parents parallel those of Pattern I "highly secure" parents. Children in two of the Pattern II families are not enrolled in any structured extracurricular activities at all and the parents feel very comfortable about that.

Planning and Obtaining Information About Schools

While all parents naturally talk to their relatives and friends about issues related to their children's education, it becomes quite clear that "tenuously secure" parents have to work much harder to obtain the information they think they need and they use the information to do educational planning way ahead of schedule. One mother's experience illustrates this point. Although she has used the official parent information center provided by the city's public school system, she relies heavily on informal networks seeking information from other Chinese parents in the school about summer campus, the teaching styles of specific teachers in the school, and how to win admission to the city's prestigious exam schools. She also consults her better-educated colleagues and supervisors, who are not Chinese, about

matters such as the names of private schools, the kind of computers to buy, and college entrance requirements. Considering the age of the child, one would view any attempt to learn about college entrance requirements as premature, but this action is indicative of the insecurity these parents feel. Aware of their disadvantage, they cannot take chances but must possess all the information they can gather to make the "right" educational decision. Interestingly, because the author is a professor, the interview is looked upon by some Pattern III families as an opportunity to obtain or verify information about education.

The picture is quite different with the "highly secure" parents. In fact, they speak very little about planning their children's schooling. They already possess much of the information that "tenuously secure" parents seek. For example, one father is a high school graduate from the most prestigious exam school in the city before going on to attend an Ivy League college. One mother is a teacher while another is an active volunteer in the school. These parents see no need to ask the author for advice or to check out the accuracy of information they have heard.

With the exception of one set of parents, Pattern II "moderately secure" parents have adequate knowledge of the U.S. school system. Regardless of the extent of knowledge, these parents do consult their relatives or other Chinese parents in school, but their effort lacks the intensity and urgency characteristic of that of Pattern III "tenuous secure" parents. There is much less talk of long term planning for their children's education.

Monitoring Homework and Promoting Literacy

All parents in the sample expect their children to do the homework assigned by the teacher, but in general, "highly secure" parents are much more relaxed than "tenuously secure" parents in their approach to homework. For example, completing homework is seen as the child's responsibility even at this young age. None of the "highly secure" parents make up and assign extra homework for their young children, a practice commonly found in the "tenuously secure" and "moderately secure" families.

Whereas some "highly secure" parents complain that there is too much homework that is not challenging, that is, "busywork" emphasizing drills and rote memory, the common complaint of the "tenuously secure" parents is that there is insufficient homework. They have no issue with the emphasis on drills; in fact, they subscribe to the axiom that practice makes perfect. For example, these parents evaluate the quality of a school or a teacher by the amount of homework assigned. Assigning extra homework is done regularly and at an early age in two of the "tenuously secure" families, and to a lesser extent in the third family. Two rationales are given for

this practice: one is to provide more practice of skills learned in school, something that the school seems not to stress, and the other is to develop good study habits (sitting down after school to study) in the children from an early age. Checking homework is a nightly ritual in Pattern III families. In fact, one mother blames herself when her child's grades slip slightly, saying "I can't be too harsh on him because I am partly to blame. With the reorganization at my firm, I have been too busy to check his homework on a daily basis or make him redo shoddy work."

In this area, Pattern II "moderately secure" parents resemble Pattern III "tenuously secure" parents, but there is a difference in that the former assume a more relaxed attitude toward homework, which is viewed as primarily the child's responsibility.

A finding that cuts across all three patterns is that parents are not the only ones making up or checking homework for young children. In one family, the grandmother makes up math problems. In another family, the older brother enjoys making up quizzes and exercises for the younger brother and then grading them. The older sister in yet another family alternates with the mother in monitoring the young child's homework.

Going to the library or bookstore to get books, reading to the child or having the child read to the parent are stressed in all families, but "tenuously secure" parents are less likely than "highly secure" parents to read to the child. As the child moves up the grades, some "tenuously secure parents" increasingly realize the role of reading skills in academic success. In the last year of data collection, one mother reports that she not only requires the child to read but to write a short summary as well to show that he understands what he reads.

In "highly secure" families, parents typically promote reading through modeling, that is, buying books and being avid readers themselves. Although reading to the child (by the parents and/or older siblings) is almost a daily or nightly ritual in these families, there is no attempt to push their children to read before the school begins to teach reading. This laid-back approach characteristic of "highly secure" parents is illustrated by this statement made by an American-born mother, "I tried to teach him to read this summer, but he's not really into it. You know, I haven't really pushed for it … I figure between now and the first grade, he will be reading, so … I don't think we've put much pressure, maybe we're not typical Asian parents."

The picture of Pattern II "moderately secure" families is a mixed one. Frequent reading to the child is stressed but there is less modeling of reading on the part of the parents themselves.

School Involvement and Parental Assertiveness

The only parent in the sample who is not employed outside of the home has the most active involvement in the school. She is a Pattern I "highly secure" parent. In addition to being a member of the school council and other school committees, she volunteers regularly in the library, helps with fundraising, and works on the parent's newsletter. She also participates in an annual parent-teacher retreat to discuss curriculum issues. She is in school at least once a week and is a well-known figure in the school community. This type of intensive involvement in the school is not found in the other two "highly secure" families because work schedule is the major barrier.

For the "tenuously secure" parents, work schedule is only part of the problem. In general, they limit their involvement to attending parent-teacher conferences and sometimes attending children's performances as their schedule permits. They typically do not serve as volunteers in school or actively participate in parents councils. Those who have attended parent council meetings report that they do not feel they can participate fully. They can understand what is going on but would never feel confident about expressing their opinions in public in English or assuming leadership positions. However, one such parent makes great effort to help out when language is not an issue, for example, being an escort on field trips occasionally or calling other Chinese parents about special events.

It should be noted that when it comes to their children's well being and academic progress, both "highly secure" and "tenuously secure" parents can be quite vocal. Examples include requesting that the child be assigned to a particular homeroom teacher, talking to the teacher about the child's injury in school, asking the teacher to switch the child to a different reading group, and clarifying the teacher's mislabel of the child as LEP (limited English proficiency). Actual complaints about school policies are infrequent in the sample of ten sets of families. However, "highly secure' parents are more likely to complain to the principal and to contemplate collective action with other parents whereas "tenuously secure" parents are more likely to express their individual concern to the teacher. This difference may be indicative of different beliefs around the efficacy of advocating for policy changes. Although some parental reticence in challenging institutional policies may be due to their respect for the teacher, the data indicate another factor: a lack of confidence that their voice would make a difference. One "tenuously secure" parent's remark is quite telling, "Every school has its own policy, its own curriculum; you can't expect them to change just because you aren't happy with it. So it is useless to say anything." Perhaps in these parents' experiences with schools and other institutions in their home countries, they simply have not seen that ordinary citizen actions are powerful enough to result in policy changes.

Pattern II "moderately secure" parents are hardly distinguishable from the other two types of parents with regard to volunteering in school and attending parent meetings and other events. None of the "moderately secure" parents, however, have requested a particular teacher or gone to the school to straighten out a problem. They seem to be the most satisfied with the school.

Socialization Toward Functioning in a Multicultural Society

Racial minority parents in the United States cannot be content with preparing their children just to function within the ethnic community. To be successful, one needs skills to negotiate with mainstream society. All the families in the study are keenly aware of this reality. Exploration of how "highly secure," "moderately secure," and "tenuously secure" families socialize their children with respect to cultural identity, racism, and cross-cultural interactions have yielded some interesting findings.

A significant finding is that all children in the sample are aware of their Chinese heritage and all have good friends who are non-Chinese as well as Chinese. Some of the children refer to themselves as Chinese Americans while others refer to themselves as Chinese but always adding a qualifier that they were born in America.

Another significant finding is that whereas all the "highly secure" parents regard themselves as Chinese Americans, the "tenuously secure" parents all think of themselves as Chinese, regardless of U.S. citizenship. Their own social circles also tend to be Chinese. This has implications for how they approach education. Realizing that being Chinese immigrants could be a disadvantage for their children, they feel pressure to try harder, to take more deliberate actions to ensure their children can speak English without an accent, and be comfortable around people from different backgrounds. An example is that the parents have taken great pains to ensure from an early age the child is exposed to English outside of the home and interacts with non-Chinese. Well-planned actions are taken to find a multicultural day-care center instead of a Chinese-speaking babysitter and to use resources outside Chinatown for extracurricular activities even if the location is less convenient. These actions should not be misconstrued as the parents turning their back on their own culture because these parents maintain a very Chinese environment at home, including speaking Chinese. All "tenuously secure" parents emphasize the need for their children to speak good English since they themselves have experienced the disadvantage of limited English proficiency.

Among the three "highly secure" families, there are different degrees of identification with Chinese culture. One family has strong connections with

a Chinatown church and the mother in this family is fluent in Cantonese. Their strong beliefs in respect for elders and taking education seriously are no different from those of "tenuously secure" parents, but what makes this family different is the parent's multiracial social circle and their high degree of comfort in mainstream society. The children's ability to speak English and exposure to people from different backgrounds are not matters to worry about and therefore no special actions need to be taken. The same is true of the two "highly secure" families, who have friends of all racial backgrounds and have Irish and Polish godmothers for their children. The parent's knowledge of Chinese culture and language is limited. They state that they "do not make a big deal" about being Chinese, but they do want their children to know where they and their families come from.

The following incident that took place in a "highly secure" family speaks to the mother's openness toward interracial marriage for her own children: "One day my kids were talking about getting married and my second son said there aren't any Chinese girls around that he likes, and my older son said, 'You don't have to marry Chinese.' I said, 'Right, you can do whatever you want—don't you know this is a free country?'" Although interracial marriages for their children are tolerated by "tenuously secure" parents, they tend to be viewed as "second best" though probably unavoidable because the children were born here.

In some ways, Pattern II "moderately secure" parents are like Pattern III "tenuously secure" parents; they identify themselves as Chinese rather than American or Chinese American. This Pattern II mother's comment highlights the complexity of the identity issue: "Socially I am not totally comfortable with whites although professionally I can forge a relationship with them. I do not identify with people in Hong Kong or China. I am most comfortable with American-born Chinese or Chinese who have been in the United States a long time. If you press me, I will describe myself as a *yee mun* (immigrant) but still Chinese." Another Pattern II parent describes her family, "We are not that traditional and not really Americanized." Unlike "tenuously secure" parents, none of the "moderately secure" parents makes a habit of reminding their children of their Chinese ethnicity. Pattern II parents make very little conscious effort to prepare their child to enter a multicultural world, probably because they believe that their child is already able to do so. What marks Pattern II families from the Pattern I and Pattern III families is that in the "moderately secure" families, there is more of a linguistic gap between parent and child. The parents speak to each other in Chinese but the children tend to speak English at home even though they understand Chinese. This pattern is in contrast to the Pattern I families in which both parents and child speaks English and to Pattern III families in which both parents and child speaks Chinese.

The issue of racial discrimination against, and stereotyping of, the Chinese is one that almost all parents in the sample have either experienced personally or believe is alive and well. They recount incidents of being the targets of racial slurs and jokes in public places, being stereotyped as not knowing any English when shopping, being used as tokens in mainstream organizations, being teased in school, or facing the "glass ceiling" in the workplace. Nevertheless, none of the parents has made this issue a centerpiece in their child-rearing. In fact, there seems to be a strong tendency to avoid discussing these issues with a child so young. This "tenuously secure" parents comments are quite typical:

> It's hard to be completely integrated. Somehow people tend to get together with the same ethnic groups ... I don't think there will be a big problem. But if you want to climb to an upper level of society, there will be a problem of ethnicity ... Telling my kids about racism now may frighten them. When they encounter the experience, they would know how it feels.

In "tenuously secure" families, without mentioning racism explicitly, the parents have nevertheless suggested indirectly that the child must work harder than others because of the child's ethnicity. The only example of a parent explicitly discussing racism with the child is from an interview with a "highly secure" mother:

> ...because one time we were talking about the race riots in LA, and he's like, 'Well, why are they doing it?' And I explained about Rodney King, you know, the kind of stuff a six-year-old can understand. And he says, 'Well, what's the difference? It's just a different tan.' And I said, 'Well, that's how I wish everybody would look at, that to be black is to be a little darker, it's just that there's a lot of racism still out there in America.'

Like other parents of color, Chinese American parents, whether born here or not, are confronted with a formidable task: to "prepare their children to be successfully bicultural" but also "to help children learn to negotiate instances of racism without losing motivation or self-esteem" (Swap, 1993, p. 119). The parents in the present study are probably fearful that too early an introduction to the reality of racism may serve to discourage their children. Perhaps there is also a genuine belief that despite race-related obstacles, opportunities do exist in this country for Chinese Americans to move ahead.

Attention to Child's Social-Emotional Development

The range of purposes and methods of socialization of Chinese American children has been extensively discussed (Fong & Wu, 1996). The differences in the child-rearing philosophies of "highly secure" and "tenuously secure" parents are pronounced, partly due to the different degrees of acculturation. However, in making the following comparison, the author is not suggesting that some parents ignore the social-emotional development of children. On the contrary, there is plenty of evidence that all parents in the sample are mindful of their children's psychological well being and social needs. Here are some examples drawn from interviews with "tenuously secure" parents. One parent who believes that children do need to be pushed qualifies her statement by saying "Push, yes, but not overdone. It's not good to give them pressure. You can read from the [Chinese] newspapers that children kill themselves because they got bad grades. It's a loss." Other "tenuously insecure" parents speak of the danger of overprogramming children's lives.

Thus, it is not a dichotomy or an either-or situation; rather it is the relative weight given to social-emotional development by the two different types of families that the author wishes to highlight. Mention was made earlier in this chapter about the definition of success and expectations held for the children in the two types of families. In general, "highly secure" parents give much more weight to their children's being happy and having friends. Additionally, these parents value self-expression, even expression of negative feelings such as anger and disappointment. One parent, who takes great pains to tune into her child's readiness for everything—toilet training, reading, swimming, Chinese lessons—admits that as a parent she has the final say but stresses how important it is that the child be allowed to say what is on his mind. Interestingly, this mother attributes her laid-back philosophy and practice to a reaction to her own upbringing. As a child of immigrant parents, she experienced a certain amount of pressure to attend private school, to get excellent grades, and to learn piano, skating, "everything."

Contrast this with "tenuously secure" parents who tend to think they know what is best for their children and that children should not be given too much choice. Acknowledging that the real world is full of pressure, one father observes, "As you want him to be a leader, training must start at a young age throughout his period of growth. Let him live under pressure, so that he can get used to it." In this case, as the child becomes older, he begins to talk more about his feelings, a change that at times confuses his parents, who do not know how to respond to such direct expression and who view this as evidence of the child's Americanization.

Obedience is valued much less in the "highly secure" families than in the "tenuously secure" families. One "highly secure" parent makes the distinction between obeying the teacher in the school and feeling intimidated by adults, supporting the former but discouraging the latter in her children. In summary, the author notices that conversations with "highly secure" parents are laced with comments about the child's interests, having fun, enjoying activities with friends, and feeling good about herself or himself. Little reference is made to the child's homework and grades unless a question about this is directed to the parents. With "tenuously secure" parents, it is just the opposite.

"Moderately secure" parents have stronger ties to traditional Chinese parenting styles than do Pattern I parents. At the same time, they also reflect middle-class American parenting styles more so than do Pattern III parents. They have mixed feelings about the emphasis placed on the child's happiness, interest, natural development, and autonomy. For example, one parent often follows an espousal of the merits of the developmental with a comment, "But I am not certain this is the right thing to do." In three of the four Pattern II families, the ambivalence seems to result from pressure created by grandparents and other relatives, who hold a more traditional view of children.

The Family in the Context of the Community

The community can be conceptualized in many ways: as a sociability arena, an interpersonal influence center, a mutual aid system, an organizational base, and a reference group (Warren & Warren, 1977). Communities are an important source of support and resources for families. Extended family, friends, cultural groups, and geographic communities can provide information about activities for children and parents alike. Each family's views on education and child-rearing are influenced to varying extents by their reference groups, that is, whom they define as their community.

The "tenuously secure" parents, whether they live in Chinatown or not, have a sense of belonging when it comes to Chinatown—a community in which they feel comfortable. However, there is one family in the "highly secure" group that has no ties to Chinatown. These parents regard the neighborhood school and the daycare program of the younger child as their communities. Chinatown is not mentioned even as a regular place to shop or eat in. Two "highly secure" families maintain links to Chinatown as well as their own neighborhoods. One mother describes her community identity this way, "I know a lot about Chinatown, but I am not of Chinatown." With one exception, Pattern II "moderately secure" families resem-

ble Pattern I "highly secure" parents in that they identify primarily with the suburban communities in which they reside. Of the three types of parents, Pattern II parents are the most likely to name their extended family as their community.

DISCUSSION

What explanation can be offered for differential patterns of family involvement with education? Ogbu (1983) has made valuable contributions to the understanding of the educational achievement of various minority groups by making a distinction between "voluntary" and "involuntary" minorities. He attributes the educational success of Chinese American children to the sojourner identity of Chinese immigrants. This theory is useful in shedding light on the educational achievement of Chinese American children of an earlier era. In the United States today, however, not all Chinese Americans are immigrants; there is diversity within the immigrant group, and the sojourner mentality is no longer prevalent among Chinese American immigrants.

The differences in strategies to support the child's school success may be connected to "the family's perception of their own roots as well as of American 'soil'" (Siu, 1992, p. 24). It is instructive to examine the ten families in the study with respect to Wang's (1991) typology of five Chinese American identities, which are represented by five Chinese phrases, each containing the word "gen" meaning "root." In the English language, these identities roughly correspond to the sojourner, the accommodator, the assimilator, the ethnically proud, and the uprooted.

"Highly secure" parents tend to exhibit the "ethnically proud" identity. They believe they are part of the mainstream and thus are entitled to what all other Americans possess. They may or may not know much about their Chinese heritage; nonetheless, they are proud of it. If they had also experienced some measure of school and socioeconomic success, then they would naturally feel more confident about their children's prospects. For them, continuity does exist between school success and life success. Having effectively navigated between two cultures and secure in the sense that their children will do well, these parents can afford the latitude to focus on their children's social and emotional development. A major philosophical and practical difference between American and Chinese schooling is the American emphasis on the social-emotional development of children. Parents who have experienced American schooling would be much more comfortable with this philosophy. This may result in a lessened need to engage in intensive preschool academic preparation, to closely monitor their children's school work, or to assume a highly protective stance.

In contrast, there are those Chinese American immigrant parents who view their status in this country as precarious or at least not completely secure. The identity of "moderately secure" and "tenuously secure" parents fits the description of "accommodator" (Wang, 1991). These parents have accepted the fact of their residing in the United States, but are still unsure of their acceptance by mainstream society. "Tenuously secure" parents, still trying to take root in American soil where the seed has fallen and concerned about their children's ability to compete, feel they have no choice but to expend much more effort to help their children succeed in school, attach importance to scores and grades, choose the "right" teacher or school, and plan the extracurricular activities carefully. Giving their children a competitive edge takes on great significance in these families lives—they are taking no chances (Siu, 1994a)!

Pattern II parents are "accommodators," too, but their feet are more firmly planted in two different worlds. Whereas Pattern III parents are beginning to be "accommodators," Pattern II parents have already acquired the accommodator identity described by Wang (1991). In the Pattern II families, the parents perceive themselves as fairly successful and very secure in America. They believe in the reasonable certainty of the future success of their children. Except for one family, the parents have all attended school or college in the United States. The family that is the exception could in fact be considered to be struggling since socioeconomically they are not well off. However, the fairly recent immigrant parents feel very comfortable in their adopted country and *perceive* themselves as doing "okay."

There is one characteristic that sets Pattern II families from the other families. While almost all parents in the sample work long hours, only Pattern II parents cite time pressure as a significant problem in trying to make time for all their children. In one of the four families, the mother is not employed outside of the home and this is the only family in which time pressure has not been cited as a problem. Still, she has trouble juggling the schedules of four children. Thus, one may say that Pattern II "moderately secure" families perceive themselves as experiencing some measure of success in the United States but at a significant price.

There are indeed sharp contrasts between the Pattern I "highly secure" parents and the Pattern III "tenuously secure" patterns in terms of their familiarity with U.S. schools, their perceived success, their expectations, and their parenting styles. A favorite phrase of one of the "highly secure" parents is "so, we'll see." This phrase captures the generally relaxed, flexible, and assured way that these parents look at their children, their schooling, and their future. The "tenuously secure" parents are much more "driven" and goal-directed. The themes in their conversations are competition, preparation, planning, discipline, and control. In spite of seemingly doing much more, they have more worries than the "highly secure" parents

have. Phrases frequently used by several Pattern II "moderately secure" parents such as "I don't know if this is right" or "I am torn," reflect their need to deal with the pulls of two separate and often contradictory forces.

The presence of these three patterns should not, however, obscure the striking similarities found among all the families. First, all parents envision a significant role for themselves. What's more, in some instances, this vital role in their children's education is shared with the grandparents and siblings as well. None views the school as solely responsible for the children's learning. Furthermore, all parents display a basic trust in the school as a legitimate and "helpful" institution, a trust tempered by various degrees of vigilance. A noteworthy finding from our interviews with teachers is that parents and teachers seldom discuss with each other their mutual expectations, the ideal home-school partnership, or their definition of "success" in school (Siu, 1994b). Finally, in all ten families, parents recognize the need to develop bicultural competency in their children, which is believed to be a key to success in a society that is predominantly White. An emphasis on racial discrimination and prejudice against Chinese Americans is, however, notably absent in the socialization of all the children.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDTIONS

Given the smallness of the sample and the fact that it includes no family on public assistance and only intact families, the hypotheses that have emerged from this exploratory study need to be tested with larger samples of Chinese Americans.

A comparative study of parental involvement of three generations of Japanese Americans in the education of their children (Shoho, 1992) found that increased direct involvement was highly related to English proficiency and familiarity with the dominant culture, including the educational system. Succeeding generations were not as hampered by socioeconomic, language, and cultural barriers as the first immigrant generation. Although the study of Chinese American families was not initiated to test Shoho's hypothesis, the data indicate a similar overall pattern. Those Chinese American parents the author classifies as "highly secure" tend to be familiar with the American school system and can speak English fluently. They are more likely to be active participants in the school as volunteers or decision-makers. They are also more likely to voice dissatisfaction directly to school personnel.

Based on the ethnographic study, the author has the following suggestions for teachers and principals who wish to build a strong partnership with Chinese American parents:

1. It is important for educators to understand the diversity of Chinese Americans, including diversity among immigrants. This understanding should be grounded in knowledge of the history of the Chinese in the United States (Siu, 1992). Professional development activities for teachers should address within-group differences in Chinese Americans and other ethnic groups.
2. Educators need to broaden the concept of "parent support" or "parent involvement" to "family support" and "family involvement." Many significant others contribute to a child's care and education, and schools could invite and encourage grandparents and other extended family members to attend school functions and parent-teacher conferences.
3. Educators need to value and support the day-to-day contributions family members make to their children's education at home and in the community. There should not be a "hierarchy" (Wissbrun & Eckart, 1992) of parental involvement in education. Serving on parent councils and volunteering in schools are not "higher" or "better" activities than providing the child with a stable home environment, helping the child develop a positive attitude toward school, and encouraging the child's efforts in studying (Epstein, 1995).
4. Because there is often an active informal parent network that passes information back and forth about education and enrichment activities, schools may want to consider tapping into existing ethnic community networks and working with indigenous leaders to reach out to Chinese American families, especially those who are new to this country.
5. Teachers could encourage Chinese American parents who are not proficient in English to read stories in Chinese to their children and to have their children read English stories to them. This can be presented as "homework" in the lower grades.
6. Educators need to strive to gain an insider's perspective of parental efforts to support the child's schooling. Chao (1994) argues that the "the concept of authoritarian and authoritative are somewhat ethnocentric and do not capture the important features of Chinese child rearing, especially for explaining their school success" (p. 1111). She explains that the indigenous concepts of *chao shun* and *guan*, roughly translated into English as control and governance, far from having the negative connotations associated with the English words, involve much care and concern for the child. Certainly, the strict parents in the present study exemplify the notion of training explicated by Chao.
7. Educators need to watch their tendencies to stereotype Chinese American parents, especially immigrant parents, as passive. Data

from the present study suggest that parents are assertive and resourceful when it comes to their children's education, but some have chosen to devote their energy to home- and community-centered activities instead of to those in the school building. Being active in school decision-making bodies and serving as volunteers should not be the only benchmark for measuring parental concern for education. It is encouraging to see that immigrant parents with less money, less familiarity with the school system, and more environmental constraints can and do support their children's education by making the most of personal, family, ethnic community, and mainstream community resources.

It cannot be stressed enough from the author's research and those of others (e.g., Fong & Wu, 1996) that Chinese American parents are not a monolithic group with similar child-rearing and educational views and practices. Not only are there American-born Chinese parents, but there are also Chinese immigrant parents who have attended schools in this country, adopted English as the primary language in the home, become U.S. citizens, and felt familiar and comfortable with the educational system. They are, in fact, poised to aid newer immigrant parents in learning to navigate the school system and utilize community resources. There is thus a crying need for school personnel and researchers to look beyond immigrant status, which by itself cannot tell us much about a student or his or her family.

Writing about the sociocultural adjustment of Chinese American students, Cheng (1999) emphasizes the importance of school and community efforts aimed at moving Chinese American families from marginalization to inclusion. The research reported in this chapter has shown that although Chinese American parents do not always see eye to eye with teachers on educational issues, there is a common ground upon which a positive family-school partnership can be built. And when families and schools work in concert, children almost always become the beneficiaries.

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CHAPTER 7

AM I INDIAN, AMERICAN, OR INDIAN AMERICAN?

STUDYING THE HOME AND SCHOOL EXPERIENCES OF INDIAN BICULTURAL ADOLESCENTS

Sapna Vyas

What's in a name, you ask?
My very identity, the genesis of who I am.
But who am I?
Am I Indian or American?
Or the hyphenated, split personality of 'Indo-American'?

My parents name me
but society renames me.
Which am I to be?
Should others define who I am?
Should I, could I, figure out who I am? (Rustomji-Kerns, 1995)

INTRODUCTION

In this nation of immigrants and children of immigrants, the process of negotiating between participation in two different cultures is a common

issue in many adolescents' lives. For bicultural adolescents, or those who "live at the juncture of two cultures, and can lay a claim to belonging to both cultures" (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993), home and school may appear to be two very different "worlds" in which they find themselves negotiating and constructing their cultural realities (Phelan, Davidson, & Yu, 1996; Westby & Roman, 1995). In some cases, home may represent their native culture (or their parent's native culture), while school may represent dominant White middle class culture.

As "institutional fixtures" in their lives, the home and school may elicit different values, beliefs, and expectations on the part of the adolescent, in turn, affecting his/her transitions between home and school. In some cases, these worlds may allow for continuity, in terms of the adolescent's actions and behaviors, allowing the transition to be less troublesome. In order to fully comprehend the experiences of adolescents who must balance different cultural worlds, however, we should not assume that there is always continuity between home and school, nor should we assume that continuity is what must be achieved in terms of identity development between home and school. Bicultural adolescents may be more apt to experience tensions and discontinuities in the transition between home and school, whether it is in the form of different discourses (Au, 1980; Cazden, 1990; Erickson, 1993; Heath, 1982), learning styles (Ogbu, 1982; Stearns, 1986), value systems (Garret, 1995; Gibson, 1988), cultural "scripts" (Katz, 1991), or ways of acquiring literacy (Auerbach, 1995; Noll, 1998).

These tensions or discontinuities are often what drive the development of identity. As apparent in the above-mentioned research, the negotiation between home and school has been viewed from many angles; the theme of identity development between home and school, however, has been addressed by few researchers (Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Eckert, 1989; Lee, 1994). Given that identity formation is a major developmental task during the period of adolescence, it becomes pertinent to examine identity in relation to adolescents' transitions between home and school. Furthermore, as one of the tasks of schooling is not only to support academic learning, but also, to support identity development (Eckert, 1989; Wenger, 1998), the process of understanding how bicultural adolescents negotiate between different organizations of cultural beliefs, values, and expectations in developing their identities becomes an important issue. How do bicultural adolescents experience identity in their continuous or discontinuous transitions between home and school? Do their identity experiences in transition between home and school involve defining themselves in relation to a particular reference group (e.g., Indian Americans), as processes of identity-making have been described by some racial identity theorists (Cross, 1978; Kurasaki, 1999)? Is identity ultimately a function of the vari-

ous roles that one enacts in a given context, a continuous integration of the social realms of home and school, or something else?

TWO CONTRASTING VIEWS ON IDENTITY

The potential tensions that bicultural adolescents may experience are well captured by the identity research of Erik Erikson and Kenneth Gergen, who propose two competing paradigms that attempt to account for identity development. Erikson (1980) views identity as a representation of inner continuity that is constant across various contexts; Gergen (1991), on the other hand, posits that identity is a representation of outer change (in terms of actions and behaviors) that occurs across various contexts. Thus, these theories demonstrate that identity can be represented in these two different ways, yet do not demonstrate the possibility that a sense of inner continuity *and* outer change can coexist. Why is this? Are these really two separate entities that cannot occur simultaneously in a bicultural adolescent's life, in particular?

Some researchers (Kim, 1998; Ochse & Plug, 1986) have explored Erikson's identity framework in relation to issues of cultural identity. In a cross-cultural study that focused on the psychosocial identity development of Korean American adolescents, Kim (1998) sought to determine whether Korean American adolescents experienced more severe identity crises than mainstream American adolescents, and whether the difference depended on their gender or generational status. She found that not only were there marked differences between how Korean American and mainstream American adolescents resolved their identity crises, but also, that there were significant differences between first and second generation Korean adolescents. Similarly, Ochse and Plug (1986) conducted a cross-cultural analysis of South African White and Black adult males and females, in order to assess when individuals in these different groups and genders appeared to resolve their identity crises. They found that White women resolved their identity crises first, then White men, followed by Black men. Black women in their study appeared to have the most frustrating experiences coping with identity-related tensions.

In contrast, few researchers (Minoura, 1995; Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992) have related Gergen's identity framework to issues of cultural identity. In a study of adolescents with bicultural parentage in Japan, Minoura (1995) examined how adolescents form a sense of identity by incorporating different cultural "meanings" which prevail in their environments. She found that friendship networks provided a context that influenced adolescents' subjective expressions of identity. Using the Gergen identity framework differently, Rosenwald and Ochberg (1992) argued that auto-

biographical narratives play an influential role in the process of cultural identity formation, and that the way they are told is fashioned by common cultural norms in society.

Hence, empirical evidence from cultural identity research supports the viability of both of these theories; however, these two theories appear problematical in considering the identity experiences of bicultural adolescents. In thinking about bicultural adolescents' transitions between home and school, it seems likely that they may experience identity in the form of inner continuity (i.e., I consider myself "Indian American") but also, simultaneously experience identity in the form of outer change (i.e., I feel more Indian/American/or Indian American depending on the particular context). An examination of home and school may shed some light on the issues of inner continuity and outer change that the *bicultural* adolescent may especially encounter, and whether or not these features of identity can coexist. Hence, I acknowledge that these two points of view on identity formation are often regarded as distinct and non-overlapping, however, do not think that they should necessarily be regarded as mutually exclusive. With the unique identity experiences of bicultural adolescents in mind, I would like to move beyond this traditional characterization of the two theories by further examining continuity and change in relation to bicultural adolescents' identity development between home and school.

BICULTURAL IDENTITY AS A LENS FOR EXAMINING TRANSITIONS BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

For the purposes of this research study, I use the notion of "bicultural identity" as a tool for examining bicultural adolescents' identity negotiations between home and school. I stress the importance of not just looking at "bicultural identity" as a specialized type of adolescent identity, but rather, as a lens for examining processes that are relevant to all adolescents. The use of bicultural identity as a lens into the home and school negotiation may deepen our understanding of the impact of sociocultural components that guide all adolescents' identity choices and transitions between home and school. Through studying the experiences of bicultural adolescents, I not only hope to cast a different light on the broader theories of identity, such as those of Erikson and Gergen, but also, learn more about how we might apply the notion of bicultural identity to more universal educational concerns of adolescents in the future.

Examining the Relationship between Individuals and Their Environments

The existing literature appears to focus specifically on either the individual (i.e., learning styles) or environmental factors (i.e., cultural value systems), but seldom regards the *relationship* between the two. Because my research involves studying bicultural individuals' process of movement between two different sociocultural institutions, I argue that the act of regarding home and school as unitary and isolated forces that influence the bicultural adolescent would not be appropriate. Rather, it becomes necessary to understand the notion of transition between home and school, and in turn, gain a better understanding of the "developing relationship" between the individual and these two institutions (Beach, 1995). Furthermore, much of the existing research focuses on the experiences of African American, Native American and Mexican American populations (see Delgado-Gaitan, 1991; Garret, 1995; Heath, 1982; Ogbu, 1982). There is minimal research that focuses on Asian Americans and the home-school connection, and most of the current literature on Asian individuals does not include individuals of Indian descent.

Studying the Identity Experiences of an Understudied Minority Group: Asian Americans

Commonly viewed as a "model minority" (Lee, 1994), adolescents of Asian descent are often associated with academic achievement and success. Because of this association, their potential struggles with identity in relation to education have not been largely studied, even though school plays a vital role in supporting identity development. This is an issue of concern, as I stress that we should not just associate tensions between different parts of one's identity with lack of academic success (which has traditionally been the case in past research); identity conflicts may exist regardless of how these adolescents are performing academically. Hence, this study contributes to existing research as it acknowledges that potential struggles with identity development may raise important educational and psychological implications for Indian adolescents' identity development between home and school.

This chapter examines the issue of how bicultural adolescents negotiate between home and school in forming their personal identities. In particular,

1. What are the messages that the bicultural adolescent receives from home and school, regarding academic and cultural expectations?

2. How does the bicultural adolescent define himself/herself amidst participation in two different cultures?

METHOD

Research Setting

This study took place at two high schools: "Eastern High School," a private Midwestern college preparatory school, holds central the belief that all students, ranging from average to gifted ability, possess the potential to have a successful university experience (hence, the 100% student acceptance rate into 4 year universities and colleges). Located in an upper middle class suburb, it offers a liberal arts curriculum, and emphasizes that the educational experience should extend beyond the classroom in the form of extracurricular athletic and club participation. This site contains a diverse array of students, including students of Euro American, African American, Hispanic, Middle Eastern, and Asian descent. At the time of the study, approximately 20% of the student population was of Indian descent (B. Gilman, personal communication, January 1998).

The other research site, "Western High School" is a public Midwestern high school located in an upper middle class suburb. This suburb is directly adjacent to a large public university, so a large number of students who attend the school have parents who are affiliated with the university, whether it is as professors or students. The high school is situated in a larger community that has six public elementary schools and two middle schools. The mission of the school, which also offers a liberal arts curriculum is to educate students in a supportive, challenging, and disciplined environment to become lifelong learners. During the 1999–2000 academic year, students of Asian descent comprised 7% of the total student population at this particular high school, which was 86% European American (D. Miller, personal communication, August 2000). The statistics for the percentage of Indian students, in particular, were not available.

Participants

The analysis focused on the home and school experiences of five males and three females, ranging in age from 15–18. The participants were high school students who were children of first generation Indian immigrant parents. Their parents had immigrated from India to the United States in order to seek high educational and professional aspirations, such as pursuing graduate level degrees and/or the necessary training to become medi-

cal professionals or engineers. All but one participant were born and raised in the United States and were exposed to both Indian and mainstream American cultures; the exception was one male participant, Girish, who was born in France, but immigrated to the United States with his parents when he was a couple of months old. All participants spoke English fluently, and some could engage in basic conversation in their parents' native language. They all came from upper middle class families; in many cases, at least one parent was a medical professional. The participants included:

Indian American

Dinesh: An outgoing and talkative student, he chose to associate with mostly Indian male classmates. He considered himself "Indian American," but also acknowledged that he experienced identity differently between home and school.

Rita: Quiet and shy in comparison to the other participants, she chose to mainly associate with Indian classmates. She considered herself "Indian American," but also acknowledged that she experienced identity differently between home and school.

Sagar: A curious and talkative student, he chose to associate with a combination of Indian and non-Indian classmates. He considered himself "Indian American," but believed that he experienced continuity (in terms of identity) in his experiences at home and in school.

Girish: A quiet and serious student, he expressed that he felt most comfortable associating with classmates who shared his Indian background. He considered himself to be "Indian American," but believed that he experienced continuity (in terms of identity) in his experiences at home and in school.

Indian

Sanjay: A serious and studious student, he chose to mainly associate with Indian male classmates. He considered himself "Indian," and believed that he experienced continuity (in terms of identity) in his experiences at home and in school.

Serena: A talkative and witty student, she chose to associate with mostly non-Indian classmates. She considered herself an "Indian in America," but also acknowledged that she experienced identity differently between home and school.

American

Anita: An outgoing and talkative student, she chose to associate with a combination of Indian and non-Indian classmates. She considered herself to be "American," but also acknowledged that she sometimes "felt Indian."

Ramesh: A talkative and analytical student, he chose to associate with a combination of Indian and non-Indian classmates. He considered himself to be "American," but also acknowledged rare instances when he "felt Indian."

Research Procedure

After receiving permission from principals from both schools to conduct this study, I administered a questionnaire to the students of Indian descent. This questionnaire presented a series of statements that would help me determine students' cultural stance (s) on such items as language, agreement with parental values, views on traditions, and peer choices. It served the purpose of helping me screen participants for two future interviews, based on respondents' ranges of identification with Indian and mainstream American cultures. I wanted to compare and contrast the experiences of students who (1) identified more strongly with one culture over the other or (2) identified with both cultures strongly. Students were recruited through the mail and in person (at Western High School).

Then, I sought parental consent for student participation since most of the students were under 18 years of age. I provided these students with a letter, introducing who I was, my university affiliation, and an overview of what my study was about. I also included a copy of my questionnaire with the letter. Consenting students returned the parental consent letter and a completed questionnaire to me in the mail or in person.

I contacted eight students, who had responded to my questionnaire and expressed interest in participating in my study, in order to set up an initial interview time that was convenient. These students were chosen because their questionnaire responses reflected a diverse range of bicultural identification (i.e., some students identified themselves as "Indian," some as "Indian American," and others as "American").

Next, I interviewed the participants of this study. I began the initial interview by first introducing myself and providing the interviewee with an introduction to my study. I told interviewees about my personal origins (as an Indian American) and their influences on my research interests, and emphasized that I was interested in hearing their stories about growing up as Indian teenagers in the United States, so I could gain a better understanding of how adolescents of Indian descent balance between two cultures. All interviews were conducted in English, and were 30–45 minutes in length.

Participants were interviewed in relation to the following topics:

A. Home and School
   - Does he or she see continuity and/or discontinuity in terms of his/her behavior and actions between home and school?

- Based on this apparent continuity/discontinuity, how is his/her sense of identity affected/not affected between home and school?

B. Views of Self vs. Others' Perceptions of Self
   - What are parents, teachers, and peers' academic and cultural expectations of these bicultural adolescents?

I decided that I would code my data in terms of evolving categories that reflected themes (i.e., patterns that arose in relation to the majority of participants) that I consciously chose to address in my research questions. Hence, qualitative data from these interviews was analyzed using the *constant comparative method* (Creswell, 1994), in which data was systematically collected and coded in the form of a descriptive catalog of themes, in order to qualitatively describe the messages that students received from home and school, as well as the range of bicultural identification that was exhibited by participants in this study.

In the sections to follow, I will provide examples and commentary from the interview sessions in order to arrive at answers to the research questions that were posed earlier. The research findings are presented in a sequence that corresponds to the research questions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Parent Expectations

One theme that emerged in the interviews was that Indian parents had high academic expectations of their children. Participants from both Eastern and Western High Schools stated that their parents repeatedly accentuated the importance of academic effort and achievement to them. As Dinesh, one of the Eastern High School participants, stressed, his parents expected him to have a specific type of work ethic in order to be academically successful:

> I don't think that lots of people understand the reason that we [Indian students] do well is 'cause we work hard, and 'cause our parents have shown us a work ethic … I mean, I'm not saying that White kids don't have this, it's just that my parents have enforced in me that you must work, work, work, work, work, and that's the *only* thing you should do right now.

Serena, one of the Eastern High School participants, spoke about her parents' emphasis on present academic success leading to future opportunities:

> They [parents] expect me to have all my grades be B's or higher, and after that, I think my parents want me to go to the university possibly. I already told them that I'm not going to do medicine definitely … and after that, they want me to be married and have kids, you know, be really rich, live in this big house…

Some participants made references to peers when talking about the academic expectations that they faced from their parents. Ramesh, a Western High School participant, mentioned how his parents' high academic expectations led them to want him to spend time with other students who shared the same cultural background:

> **SV**: Do your parents prefer you to associate with one group over the other?
>
> **Ramesh**: Yeah, I guess so. The Indian kids.
>
> **SV**: Why?
>
> **Ramesh**: They think they're smarter and more influential—*better* influential.

Girish, a Western High School participant, drew comparisons between Indian students' experiences and other students' experiences with parental expectations:

> **Girish**: I don't know if it is as much as intelligence as much as that their [Indian] parents are putting a lot of pressure on them at home. Whereas, the American students do not have as much pressure coming from home as Indian students. I guess if anyone tries as hard as the Indian students do, they could do just as well.

Lastly, Sagar, another Western High School participant, reiterated Girish's comments about Indian students' academic experiences with the following statement: "At school, you try your best. At home, it's like, you *do* the best."

In terms of cultural expectations, one theme that emerged in the interviews was that Indian parents often appeared strict about preserving their native culture in the United States. For some participants, this idea was manifested in their parents' desire for them to date and marry Indian individuals. The following interview excerpt captured this sentiment:

> **SV**: What do you think marrying someone non-Indian would mean to your family? What would it mean to your parents?
>
> **Dinesh**: That I disrespected their wishes. That I disrespected the culture that they've instilled in me.

Dinesh's parents felt strongly that he eventually marry a woman who shared the same religion (Hinduism) as him. Serena and Rita also stated that their parents would prefer for them to marry within the Indian culture, but both mentioned that their parents would not disown them if they did not follow through with this specific request.

Although parents often had strict cultural expectations of their children, not all participants appeared to readily adhere to their guidelines for proper cultural conduct. As a Western High School participant stated:

> **Anita**: I've mostly tried to throw away the other culture. While growing up, I didn't want to be associated with 'Asianness' at all; but now I am trying to balance, not with the Asian part exactly, but the religious part, because I have started covering my hair. I am trying to incorporate so it is less noticeable wearing stuff like that. A lot of Muslim people, when they start covering, they wear those scarves that don't match and are weird prints, and I feel so bad. Look what they are representing, or being.

Although Anita, who came from a religious Muslim family, respected her parents' wishes and kept her head covered with a *hijab* (scarf), she expressed that she did not perform this action out of her own will. This idea became apparent when she said, "it truly insults me when other people think I'm not American and wasn't born here … they think I am less of an American just 'cause of the way I look." Ramesh's reaction to his parents' cultural expectations was similar, although he went one step further to talk about how he did not feel compelled to fulfill his parents' cultural expectations of him:

> **Ramesh**: I don't feel pressure because I have gotten past that. They [parents] don't influence me anymore.
> **SV**: You mean, they don't bother you?
> **Ramesh**: No, they just *don't* influence me.

Hence, the participants of this study talked about their parents' academic and cultural expectations of them. Although participants from both schools expressed that their parents had similar types of expectations, only some participants from Western High School overtly talked about ways that they did not always personally choose to adhere to their parents' expectations.

Peer Expectations

Although participants from both schools made references to high academic expectations on the part of their parents, one theme that was particularly prevalent in the interviews with the Eastern High School participants (and noticeably absent from interviews with the Western High School participants) was that non-Indian peers contributed to a school-wide stereotype that Indian students were high achieving and successful in Math and Science courses. All four participants from this high school reported that they had, at some time in their high school experiences, been dubbed with this label by a non-Indian classmate. Three out of the four Eastern High School participants were in the school's Honors chemistry class, and had received messages similar to this one to Rita (who was an Eastern High School participant):

> **Rita**: Just yesterday, this guy who is in regular chemistry asked me and this Indian kid who was sitting there … he asked us something about the chemistry test, and he's like 'oh, you guys are in honors', and he was kind of making fun of us. And I go, 'not all Indians are smart', and he's like, 'well, you tell me one Indian who isn't smart.'

Serena, one of the few Indian students who was not in Honors chemistry, faced this same type of labeling from classmates:

> **Serena**: I'm in regular chem, and I'm probably one of the five or six only Indians in regular 'cause the rest are in honors. I'm not struggling with that class; I am getting a high B, low A, and people are always like, 'you *would* get an A 'cause you're Indian!'

Dinesh mentioned that Indian students often made fun of one another (in regards to this stereotype), and would "joke around and say 'dumb Indian' … and then the White kid will come in and say that there is no such thing as a dumb Indian; it doesn't exist." Thus, peers' expectations of their Indian peers were often a topic of conversation among Indian students at Eastern High School. Dinesh, equated his academic success in part to being Indian. As he said:

> **Dinesh**: Past grades have had [contained] lots of Indian kids, and they have done well, so everyone expects us to do well too. And we are doing well, so I think that it adds to it too.

Serena, on the other hand, explicitly stated that she did not think that she fulfilled the vision of the stereotypical Indian student. She particularly felt that her peers' expectations of her were incongruent with her own views of herself:

> **Serena**: OK, well I see this really big stereotype with Indians … like Indians are the bomb at Science and Math … well, the thing is, I suck at Math. I mean, I'm not really bad; I can usually get B's and sometimes when I work my butt off, I get A's … I am not one of those super genius people like most Indians are. I mean, some people come up to me, they'll be like 'I want you to tutor me in Math' and I'm just like, no, 'cause I'm not good at it.

Hence, although some participants mentioned an image of the stereotypical Indian student, they differed in the ways that they identified with this stereotype.

Individual Variations in Cultural Identification

One theme that emerged in the interviews was that participants differed on their degree of identification with Indian and mainstream American cultures. Two of the Eastern High School participants tended to identify themselves as Indian.

> **Serena**: I think I'm an Indian in America. I have citizenship here. I was born here. But still, regardless of where I am, I will always be an Indian.

Sanjay, an Eastern High School participant, also identified more strongly with being Indian, but would describe himself differently depending on whom he was talking to.

> **Sanjay**: Normally I would say I am Indian to Americans because obviously I'm American. I would tell them that I am Indian because that is more commonly what you would say; but maybe to a foreigner, like if I went to a different country, I would tell them that I am American.

Hence, for these two participants, being "Indian" provided them with a sense of inner continuity and affiliation to their parents' native roots in India. Dinesh and Rita, equally acknowledged the Indian and American

aspects of their identities. They identified as Indian Americans. Their statements about personal identity were very similar.

> **Dinesh**: I'm Indian American. First of all, my roots are in India. My parents are Indian. I eat Indian food. I wear Indian clothes. I sleep in Indian clothes sometimes. At home, my lifestyle is Indian. I talk to my parents in Hindi or English or whatever … then at school, I'm American and we live in America.
>
> **Rita**: Both [Indian and American]. I live in the US. I consider myself American 'cause I wear American clothes. I participate in American culture; but still, I have ties with my Indian background. I go to temple. I can understand my native language. I go visit India, and I wear Indian clothes sometimes.

Hence, Dinesh and Rita experienced identity in the form of inner continuity (i.e., defining themselves as "Indian American"), but also appeared to experience identity as outer change (i.e., as changing depending on a particular context). Girish and Sagar, also defined themselves as "Indian American;" however, although both acknowledged the two cultures that comprised their identities, they were not conscious of "code switching" in different contexts. Girish did not find himself drawing distinctions between the two cultures very often.

> **Girish**: I never really differentiate between being Indian and being American. I just kind of do whatever … I don't really know how to define acting Indian or acting American. I am always a part of American culture. It's not like when I go home I'm in India.

Furthermore, Sagar talked about how he did not feel like he ever had to balance between two different cultures. He stated, "It's not an issue 'cause I don't think about it. It's not like I am trying to be American or trying to be Asian. It's just the way I am." Hence, they both appeared to experience identity in the form of inner continuity.

Lastly, Anita and Ramesh stated that they identified more strongly with being American. In talking about his participation in two cultures, Ramesh said that "I don't really try to balance. I think I'm pretty much American, you know?" Anita echoed these sentiments by stating the following:

> **Anita**: I view myself as an American. I really honestly do not feel any ties to 'Asianness' at all, which I sometimes feel bad about 'cause it's my country, but I really don't care. I haven't really interacted with them. I'm not

> planning on going there to live or anything. I don't watch Indian movies. I don't listen to Indian music. I can't stand them. I'm in some ways more American than other people. Like, I always wear red, white, and blue on the 4th of July. I'm so patriotic. I'm so excited to vote, because I just registered. And so I'm all about America.

Hence, it appears that Ramesh and Anita, for the most part, experienced their identity with a sense of inner continuity, although in response to some of the interview questions, both acknowledged that they sometimes felt "more Indian" when they were in certain settings (hence, experiencing outer change in terms of their identities). Although most participants had lived in the United States since they were born, they still demonstrated a wide range of bicultural identification in this study: most participants chose to define themselves as "Indian American," while some Eastern High School participants considered themselves to be "Indian," and some Western High School participants considered themselves to be "American."

However, although some participants appeared to identify with the Indian aspect of their identities, they did not always feel connected to their ethnic backgrounds. For instance, although Sanjay described himself as "Indian," he did not experience strong ties to his ethnic background.

> **Sanjay**: I don't know the language. I can understand and speak a little. I don't do it that much. I don't know too much about Hinduism. I'm not that interested in learning about it either. And I think that if I were to have ties, I should be involved with my culture and my temple and all. And I know some kids are, but I don't think I have too many ties that I would keep in touch.

Rita expressed the same feelings.

> **Rita**: I don't know much about the stories of all the gods and all that. I don't know much about that. And I wish I sort of knew my native language so I can sort of relate to them [relatives], because most people, and my grandparents, don't speak English. I would like to communicate more with my grandparents, but it's really hard to.

Girish also conveyed that he wished he could speak his parents' native language.

Girish: I'd like to learn to speak Hindi better. I can only speak conversational Hindi, and we watch movies and things like that and pick up things here and there, but I'd like to know it so I could be fluent.

The topic of the lack of representation of India in existing school curricula came up in a few interviews. In this excerpt with Sagar, it became apparent that he wished to pursue his cultural interests within the context of the school setting, so he could feel more connected to his home culture:

SV: Do you ever wish that you had more assignments or course work that deals with India?

Sagar: Yes, especially religiously, because religiously, I really don't know that Much … Hinduism and stuff like that.

As evident in the above quotations, although participants from both schools may have acknowledged the Indian aspect of their identities, in some ways, they did not feel completely connected to their ethnic backgrounds.

Maintaining a Sense of Indian Identity through Friendships at School

In relation to the specific context of school, participants revealed that it was easier to maintain a sense of Indian identity when they had Indian classmates with whom they could spend time with. Girish supported this idea:

Girish: I feel like it is easier to talk to people that are of the same background … you can relate to more things, like how our parents are compared to American parents or a different kind of parents. Just the way things go. We also meet a lot at the temple and cultural activities.

Anita also felt that she was able to relate to her Indian peers on a social level.

Anita: I usually have the most fun with them because they grew up here too. And they are like in that same weird limbo area so they understand both cultures and you can do just everything and say stupid things and they'll understand any sort of joke you make.

Dinesh enjoyed spending time with Indian classmates because he felt that they could relate on an academic level.

Dinesh: It's nice for us because we have something binding us together. We're all in the same classes too, because we're all pretty decent students … I think our parents enforced it … take honors English, take honors everything.

Though participants from both schools reported that they enjoyed spending more time with Indian classmates, Serena stated explicitly that her closest friends were not Indian; however, she did not find it problematical to maintain a sense of identity in their presence.

Serena: I'm Indian and I'm not going to hide that. If I'm going to have a group of all White friends, I'm not going to dye my hair blonde and put ten pounds of white powder on my face.

Therefore, for a variety of different reasons, the participants of this study did not appear to find it difficult to maintain a sense of Indian identity at school.

Identities Change Over the Course of Time

Another theme that emerged in the interviews was the possibility of participants' identities changing over time. As Dinesh reported, his sense of cultural identity had changed from middle school to high school.

Dinesh: But I think in middle school, I kind of wanted to be White. I was like, 'yeah, I'm White' and I'd dress up in the trends. Now I just wear whatever I want. And we're all proud of being Indian.

Hence, as Dinesh made the transition from middle school to high school, he began to identify more with the Indian aspect of his identity. In some ways, Ramesh echoed these sentiments when he talked about his middle school experience.

Ramesh: I think for certain stuff I'm Asian, but on a regular basis, I'm American.

SV: Do you think you would have answered that question the same way when you were in middle school?

Ramesh: I'd probably say 'American', just 'cause it was cooler, I guess.

One participant, Rita, mentioned that she foresaw her sense of identity changing in the future.

> **Rita**: Honestly, I'd probably be more American [in the future]. It's because of my parents and since I live with them … they have an influence on me, and because of them I go to temple and go to all of these Indian parties; but if I lived alone or with a husband, then I probably wouldn't be as much [Indian].

For Rita, being American meant physically and emotionally moving away from her Indian roots and becoming increasingly assimilated to the ways of mainstream American culture. Thus, it was worthy to note that some of the participants believed that they had or would experience changes in their sense of identity over the course of time.

Identities Change in Different Social Contexts

Although none of the participants reported feeling confused about participating in both Indian and mainstream American cultures, some of them did report feeling "more Indian" or "more American" in particular situations. As Ramesh stated, "I think for certain stuff I'm Asian, but on a regular basis, I'm American."

Rita also experienced a sense of identity that changed in relation to the particular social context she was participating in.

> **Rita**: …when you're at a party or something, and they play American music and you dance to American music. I don't feel Indian at all. I try to fit in with everyone else … and then when I go to India, I try to be Indian.

Others, such as Sanjay, did not see themselves experiencing this situational change in identity.

> **Sanjay**: Yeah, in most situations, I don't feel one way or the other. I feel just normal, I guess, unless there's some kind of reason for me to be conscious of it, my background. I don't think there are many situations like that. Normally, I would just feel like everyone else.

Therefore, participants from both schools acknowledged that they may experience situational changes in the ways that they experienced their identities.

DISCUSSION

Parents and Peers' Expectations: Flattering or Potentially Detrimental?

Parents equating academic and cultural expectations with each other. Interestingly, when given a few examples of cultural expectations and then asked about what their parents' *cultural* expectations were of them, participants often mentioned that their parents expected them to excel *academically.* This common response on the part of the participants raises an interesting issue. Could this blurring of distinctions between academic and cultural expectations be due to the idea that doing well academically is regarded as a cultural standard for this particular group of Indian immigrants and their children? Their parents' academic emphasis could in part reflect the impact of their own experiences as immigrants to the United States. Facing the emotional and physical adjustment to a foreign culture, they came to the United States with high educational and professional aspirations, such as pursuing Ph.D. degrees (by means of a language other than their own) and becoming science professionals. In a matter of years (undoubtedly filled with hard work and effort), they became established in professionally and financially secure occupations.

The participants came from upper middle class backgrounds and attended high schools that were located in affluent suburbs. All participants had at least one parent who had pursued a graduate level degree in a professional field. It is likely that parents both modeled and strongly communicated the message of needing to be financially and professionally successful. Thus, parents' implicit and explicit messages to their children regarding academic expectations were likely to be the result of their own experiences in transition from India to the United States.

It is worth noting, however, that participants from both schools appeared to have differing responses to their parents' academic and cultural expectations of them. While participants from both high schools reported the presence of similar parental expectations, only some participants from Western High School explicitly talked about how they did not always agree and/or adhere to these expectations. Why is this? A simple rationale for this finding could be attributed to differences in individual personalities. It could very well be that participants such as Ramesh and Anita were more outspoken, and simply felt more comfortable voicing their disagreement with their parents' views, making their discontent more explicit than other participants; however, it is difficult to fully support this rationale, given that although Anita expressed displeasure over some of

the cultural norms that her family adhered to, she still respected her parents' wishes by wearing a *hijab*, similarly to other women in her family.

It is more likely that participants from Western High School felt the need to vent about parental expectations because these expectations did not always mesh with the parental expectations that their non-Indian peers encountered in their daily lives. For instance, in a school that was predominantly European American (and contained a very small population of Indian students), it is likely that participants such as Ramesh and Anita felt that the messages they received from home were unique or different (and perhaps less fair) than what they perceived others' experiences with parental expectations to be. Furthermore, the Indian students at Western High School did not appear to have a strong social network of Indian peers, unlike the participants at Eastern High School, where Indian students alone constituted approximately 20% of the student population; hence, it is likely that they did not have as many informal opportunities to vent about these frustrations with their fellow peers, who were mostly of a different cultural background and perhaps would not have had the same types of experiences. The Eastern High School students, by contrast, had a stronger reference group of individuals who shared similar backgrounds to them.

Being labeled with the "Indian stereotype" may not always have positive consequences for students. At Eastern High School, peers communicated that they had very high academic expectations of their Indian classmates. Some participants, such as Dinesh and Sanjay, confidently expressed that they did indeed fulfill the Indian student stereotype of being high achieving and academically successful in Math and Science courses, and perhaps, were flattered that they were regarded highly in terms of their academic performance. Interestingly, although Western High School participants made references to high academic expectations communicated from their parents, they did not make any references to their peers in this regard. An all-encompassing image of Indian students that was so persistently supported by students at one school was barely a topic of discussion with a group of Indian students at a school that in some regards, was similar (i.e., located in an upper middle class neighborhood) but in other ways, quite different (i.e., a public school that not only had a larger student population, but considerably fewer Indian students). An explanation for the lack of attention paid to this stereotype within Western High School may be that even if most of the Indian students were in fact participating in mostly honors or advanced placement courses, their presence would simply not be as visible, given that they comprised such a small percentage of the student population; by contrast, at Eastern High School, it would be more obvious if many Indian students were in such courses, because after Caucasian students, they comprised the next largest cultural group in the school.

Although many of these students may have done well in the academic setting, however, we know that there is definitely more to the high school experience than achieving academic success. The potentially damaging psychological impact of this stereotype is an issue that cannot be ignored. One participant, Serena, for instance, did not see herself fitting this stereotype and the feelings associated with being wrongly labeled by peers often lead her to be frustrated and annoyed. Was this all she felt though?

On the surface, most participants of this study appeared to be academically successful students from financially secure households. We may be quick to assume, however, that having these traits meant that they are doing fine, mentally and emotionally. We may be overlooking an important component of these students' home and school experiences: what thoughts and feelings were going through their heads. In particular, how do students find themselves coping with peer expectations if they do not see themselves fitting the apparent stereotype of the Indian student? It is likely that students (who do not see themselves fitting the vision of the stereotype) experience feelings of inadequacy or diminished self-worth as the objects of social comparison with fellow Indian classmates. Peers and parents may contribute to this heightened sense of social comparison. Unfortunately, the pressure placed on lower achieving Indian students (who also may not do well in their Math and Science courses) to succeed may lead them to become predisposed toward learned helplessness in various achievement-oriented situations in school. Such feelings of learned helplessness have the potential of being detrimental to a student's sense of self efficacy, and may lead a student to doubt his/her capabilities of achieving success in school (Brophy, 1998). Future research might cast a different light on the study of this stereotype (which holds true for other Asian groups as well) by examining the implications for these students' senses of self-efficacy and their perceptions surrounding the possibilities of academic success in school. We may find that there is more to this picture than how it appears superficially.

Intragroup Variations in Bicultural Identification

Through interviews with participants, it became apparent that high school students of Asian descent defined their sense of bicultural identity in a variety of ways. An individual's sense of being bicultural may vary widely, depending on how he or she perceives the two cultures and the degrees to which he or she identifies with each (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). Although all students were *bicultural* by La Fromboise et al.'s (1993) definition, and their responses about identity demonstrated the importance of acknowledging that it is likely that intragroup variation

will exist when considering how individuals of a particular cultural group define their senses of identity.

Though it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions based on a small sample of students, one may speculate why some participants from Eastern High School were quick to define themselves as "Indian," while some participants from Western High School were adamant in calling themselves "American." It is likely that these students may have defined themselves the way they did based on the degree of their exposure to peers who shared or did not share the same cultural background as them. For instance, Indian students at Eastern High School were likely to have many fellow Indian classmates who shared similar attitudes, beliefs, expectations from others, and life experiences. Instead of feeling the need to assimilate into the mainstream culture of students at their school, these students perhaps felt comfortable with either (a) "being Indian," which involved associating mainly with Indian peers or (b) experiencing bicultural competence (LaFromboise, et al., 1993) in a school atmosphere that not only supported mainstream American culture, but also maintained a strong connection to various ethnic/cultural reference groups. By contrast, in a school such as Western High School, which was considerably less ethnically and culturally diverse in its composition, Indian students may have had more consistent exposure and contact to peers who were not of Indian descent. During the period of adolescence, a time when all youths may be particularly concerned with how they appear in the eyes of their peers (Erikson, 1980), some Indian students at Western High School perhaps did not feel comfortable acknowledging the fact that they were in some visible ways, ethnically and culturally different from the mainstream student population. Another possible explanation for these participants' minimal identification with Indian culture could be related to the conscious (and sometimes, unconscious) desire to gain a sense of autonomy and individuality from one's parents, a response that is typical of all adolescents (Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, Flanagan, & Mac Iver, 1993). Based on the small sample of students, however, it is difficult to predict whether a larger, comparative study of Indian students in an ethnically and culturally diverse, upper middle class, private school *and* a predominantly Caucasian, upper middle class, public school would yield similar findings and conclusions.

Past research on ethnically/culturally diverse students has focused on the negative impact of discontinuities between home and school, and has foregrounded such issues as academic underachievement, dropouts rates, and the negative consequences of being part of low SES communities where there are not many resources for students (as cited in Berliner & Calfee, 1996). The participants of this study, however, were mostly average to high achieving minority students from upper middle class backgrounds; though they experienced a few discontinuities between home and school

(e.g., value systems), many of their experiences were continuous as well. Although home and school have historically served very different purposes, in this study, they almost appeared to reinforce one another. This study contributes to past research on ethnically/culturally diverse students because through studying the home and school experiences of these bicultural students, we may be able to better understand the struggles of other students who fall prey to major discontinuities between home and school, and learn more about the essential qualities and practices of educational institutions that can help reverse the patterns that have been reported in past research. Also, future research that involves larger, comparative analyses of different types of school settings (such as with schools that are predominantly white and/or reflect lower socioeconomic backgrounds) could provide a more accurate picture of the educational and psychological experiences of Indian bicultural youths in the United States.

Moving Beyond Erikson and Gergen's Theories of Identity

This study examined two competing views on the process of identity formation. Erikson sees identity as a representation of inner continuity that is constant across various contexts; Gergen, on the other hand, believes that identity is a representation of outer change (in terms of actions and behaviors) that occurs across various contexts; therefore, traditionally, these two theories are characterized in opposition to one another. The results of this study challenge the idea that these two theories should always be seen as mutually exclusive. Why is this? The conflicting viewpoints between Erikson and Gergen make it difficult for us to understand how home and school affected the identity formation of five participants in this study. The experiences of most participants (Dinesh, Rita, Serena, Ramesh, and Anita) support my belief that one may experience identity in the form of inner continuity (i.e., considering themselves "Indian," "Indian American," or "American") but also, simultaneously experience identity in the form of outer change (i.e., feeling more Indian/American/or Indian American depending on the particular social context). The identity experiences of Sanjay, Girish, and Sagar present exceptions to this idea, because all three of these participants asserted that they experienced continuity across all contexts, and did not see the role of outer change as relevant to their senses of identity. Thus, the results of this study promote a move beyond the traditional characterization of these two identity theories as mutually exclusive. This study argues for a new understanding of identity formation which acknowledges some elements or qualities of continuity that allow the individual to feel some sense of self sameness, yet also allows for some variation due to social and cultural changes in individual-context relationships.

The experiences of bicultural adolescents may not be the only case in which continuity and change can be experienced simultaneously. The study of bicultural adolescents' identity development between home and school can also be viewed more broadly in the context of education, as boundary negotiations that all adolescents may endure at some point in their experiences as high school students. Phelan et al. (1996) coined the phrase "border struggle" to describe the experiences of students who face numerous types of discontinuities between home and school, such as those that pertain to culture, socioeconomic class, language, and gender expectations. The continuities and discontinuities faced by the participants of the present study, more specifically, were viewed through the lens of identity. Future research should continue to examine students' "border struggles" and negotiations through this lens, as the process of identity formation appears to be a particularly salient developmental task in the lives of adolescents.

CONCLUSION

The development of special interest groups and social organizations that exist at the intersection of home and school may help adolescents cope better with issues related to identity, as well as help them bridge the possible gaps that may exist between their academic and extracurricular worlds. For instance, ethnic student organizations (such as an Indian American student organization) or after-school programs (such as an Asian literature club) may provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their personal identity issues in an academic-like setting, and in turn, help them reduce potential tensions within their sense of identity.

Future research could address bicultural identity concerns through the formation of supportive literacy environments within the school. Literacy has the potential to be a powerful force in the construction, exploration, and expression (s) of identity, and may be a means by which we help students bridge the possible gaps between their different worlds. Such programs within schools may help students find personal and cultural significance in relating their sense of identity with literacy activities (such as reading and writing) that may be typically viewed as "academic work," as well as better equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with identity concerns that may arise in their lives in the future.

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Part II

HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ISSUES AND EXPERIENCES: SOCIALIZATION AND ASIAN AMERICAN IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER 8

SOCIALIZATION EXPERIENCES OF ASIAN AMERICAN STUDENTS IN PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

A CASE STUDY

Zhixin Su

INTRODUCTION

Socialization in professional schools has been studied extensively in medicine (Becker, Geer, Hughes, & Strauss, 1961; Light, 1980; Reader & Goss, 1967; Simpson, 1979), law (Elkins, 1985; Kennedy, 1982; Lortie, 1959; Thielens, 1965), and teaching (Zeichner, 1980; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). By definition, professional socialization designates the process by which neophytes come to acquire, in patterned and selective fashion, the beliefs, attitudes and values, skills, knowledge, and ways of life established in the professional culture (Su, 1990). The background characteristics and prior experiences of the socializers and socializees, the various sources of influence and patterns of interaction in the socialization process are all important factors that contribute to the making of the professionals.

While participating in a national study of the education of educators (Goodlad, 1990), the author designed and conducted a study of the socialization of teacher candidates in 29 selected teacher training institutions across the United States (Su, 1990). The majority of the subjects in that study—more than 90%—were from the mainstream group. The study did not focus on minority teacher candidates as a special subgroup although it recognized the need to recruit and retain more minority teachers in the teaching profession. In fact, the existing literature contains no substantial information regarding the socialization experiences of minority students, despite their increasing presence in major professional schools across the country. Very few articles and books are available about students from diverse backgrounds as they go through professional training to become human service professionals. And scholars in ethnic studies have in general failed to tackle this area of research, as evidenced by the newly published collection on Asian Americans (Nakanishi, 1994). Without such knowledge, however, efforts to recruit and prepare more and better minority professionals to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population will continue to be non-productive.

The purpose of the present study is not to test well-formulated hypotheses because of the paucity of research and therefore the lack of existing knowledge in the field, but to explore, compare, and describe, through a comparative case study of selected subjects, Asian American students' entry perspectives, expectations, and pre-service socialization experiences in teacher education, medical, and law schools. Asian Americans were chosen for the present study because even though they are among the fastest growing group in higher education, they are still under-represented in major human service professions (Escueta & O'Brien, 1991; Hsia, 1988; Su, 1993). Teacher education, medical education, and law education were selected for comparison because they represent the major human service professional schools in modern universities. In studying teacher education and making recommendations for change, teacher education scholars and reformers often refer to medical and law school models for lessons (Goodlad, 1990; Sarason, 1993; Soder, 1988). Yet no studies have been conducted to compare the perspectives of students, especially of minority students, from different professional preparation programs. To initiate an effort to fill this gap in research, the present study was designed to:

1. Explore Asian American students' entry perspectives and career considerations, including their family and educational backgrounds, prior educational experiences, and reasons for them to or not to choose to enter the human service professions.

2. Examine Asian American students' attitudes toward their chosen professions and their commitment to the professions as lifelong careers.
3. Evaluate Asian American students' socialization experiences in their training programs with a focus on the sources of influence on their development as becoming professionals.

METHOD

The subjects for the case study were fifteen Asian American students—five from the teacher education program (one Japanese American, two Korean American, one Chinese American, and one Vietnamese American), five from the medical school (one Chinese American, three Korean American, and one Vietnamese American), and five from the law school (one Chinese American, two Japanese Americans, and two Korean Americans)—in a large state university. The university is one of the major flagship research universities in the state and serves more than 30,000 highly diversified students. All the subjects in the present study were near graduation from their training programs by the summer of 1994. In the present study, they were identified through their training programs' rosters or recommended to the researchers by relevant student organization staff on the campus. They all volunteered large sums of personal time to share with researchers details of their thoughts and experiences.

Case study method as described by Sax (1979) is employed for the present study, with an emphasis on the use of lengthy, informal interviews, which has been identified as most useful for this kind of study (Schempp, Sparkes, & Templin, 1993; Su, 1990). Interview guides have been developed based on the instruments used in the author's earlier study of teacher socialization (Su, 1990). They cover the following areas of questions: family background; career considerations; earlier (K-12 and undergraduate) educational experiences; basic beliefs and values about the chosen profession; and socialization experiences in professional schools. Most of the questions are open-ended and conversational to allow the interview to follow a path chosen by the participant. All interviews were completed before the end of July 1994, when the subjects prepared themselves for graduation. Each interview was conducted in private with only one subject and the researcher present.

In data analysis and interpretation, content analysis was employed to organize interview data. Information gathered from the subjects was compared and merged to identify themes and perspectives common in all as well as in different professional groups. Comparing and contrasting the observations of becoming teachers from becoming doctors and lawyers

seems to be a logical strategy for constructing a clear, accurate, and reasonably trustworthy account of the Asian American students' experiences as becoming professionals. This approach has already been successfully employed by education researchers (Schempp, et al., 1993). It should be recognized that the students under the present study are all unique individuals. The study reports not only the common experiences among them and within their professional groups, but also outstanding individual differences. The generalizability of any study not employing a totally random and representative sample is questionable. Similarly, the reliability and validity of subjective methods such as ours are always open to criticism. Yet we believe that our methodology is more than adequate given the exploratory nature of the study and the paucity of previous studies. It should be kept in mind that the subjects for this study is only a small group of Asian American students at a particular type of university, thus they are not representative of all Asian American students on different university campuses across the country. In addition, although all Asian Americans share certain traditions and values, there are distinctive sub-ethnic groups—Chinese American, Japanese American, Korean American, etc.—amongst Asian Americans and each group has its unique characteristics that can be studied in comparison to those of other groups. Nevertheless, findings from this pioneer comparative study can still inform both the field of Asian American studies and the study of professional socialization in general. It is expected that the results from the present study will be used to improve the recruitment and preparation of Asian American as well as other minority students in human service professional schools.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Family and Educational Backgrounds

All of our 15 subjects can be considered as traditional students as they all entered the professional schools directly or shortly after undergraduate studies and all were under 27 years of age. The teacher candidates tended to be younger (average age 23.2) than the medical students (average age 25) and law students (average age 25.4) as the teacher education program is much shorter (one year graduate program) than the medical and law education programs (four and three years respectively). While all the teacher candidates were born and raised in the United States, two law students, and three medical students were born in Asian countries but came to the United States at a tender age. We cannot tell from this small sample whether there are more foreign-born Asian American students in medical and law schools than in teacher education programs but it is possible that

the more recent immigrants with foreign-born children expect and pressure their children harder to get into the more prestigious and higher-paying occupations such as law and medicine, as one of the education students in our sample suggested.

There are significant differences in the family socioeconomic status, parents' educational levels, and parents' occupations between the students in teacher education and those in law and medical schools. All education students came from middle or lower-middle class families except one, with three sets of parents having only high school education and the same parents working in low-status, low-skill jobs such as gardener, cashier, hairdresser, and school cafeteria worker. Only one education student came from upper middle class family with her father working as a doctor. In comparison, all except one of the law students and two of the medical students came from upper middle class families, with highly educated (professional or graduate degrees) parents working in high-status, professional jobs such as doctors, business owners, and university professors. The one law student and three medical students who came from middle class families also had parents with college degrees and working in mid-level, skilled jobs such as lab technicians, nurse, accountant, and owner of small business. Clearly parents' level of education is positively correlated with their occupations.

Regardless of family and educational backgrounds, the parents for all the Asian American students in our sample expected their children to achieve high levels of education, preferably obtaining graduate or professional degrees, a finding similar to that from a related study of minority teacher candidates (Su, Goldstein, Suzuki, & Kim, 1995) which discovered that although parents of Asian American, African American and Hispanic teacher candidates had lower socioeconomic status and levels of education than parents for white education students, they had similar, high expectations for their children's education.

Prior Educational Experiences

During the interviews, we asked the students to share with us their prior educational experiences, both in K-12 schools and in higher education, as these are important background information for understanding their current beliefs, attitudes and socialization experiences. The majority of the students characterized their K-12 schooling as a positive and successful experience, and being high achievers, many were placed in honors and Advanced Placement, or gifted classes in high schools. For undergraduate students, all students in our sample attended selective public or private universities in the United States. They seemed to have had optimal educational experiences. At the same time, however, more than half of the stu-

dents reported incidents of discrimination because of their ethnicity, culture and language, mostly in covert form, in their previous schooling, as this student remembered: "Throughout the time I was growing up, there were the usual references to 'slanty eyes.' Because of the stereotype that all Asians know 'kung fu,' on the way home from school, some white students picked fights with me. In class, especially English classes, the teacher would initially discount my ability or assume that I would not be as accomplished in the liberal arts ... a subtle judgment." On the other hand, the myth of the "model minority"—the assumption that Asian children can all succeed in academic work in schools (Hsia, 1988)—also created uncomfortable situations for Asian American students as they felt the expectations from teachers to be "smart," "quiet," and "obedient."

As a select group of high achievers, the students in our sample all did well in schools, tracked in gifted and talented classes. However, they were aware of the fact that a large number of minority students including Asian American students were tracked in low or remedial classes where they did not have access to high-quality knowledge (Goodlad, 1984). Three students also noted that the curriculum in the existing schools and higher education including their training programs did not represent the interests of the poor and minority groups. Students from all three different professional schools cited the lack of role models—minority educators, administrators and staff—in schools and universities as a problem. In particular, they noted that "there were less than a handful of them at the top ranks of the academic world." For undergraduate studies, most of our subjects reported successful and positive experiences, although some felt that their learning environments were socially conservative and not that friendly despite the increasing diversity in the student population, a fact also recognized by Gordon's (1994) study. Two students remembered with anger occasions when they were told to "go back where they came from." Another student felt that minority students' voices were often ignored by white professors: "At college, I was going to try public policy study, but found that the field was dominated by white students. They were so vocal that I had no chance to talk, and the white professors did not encourage minority students to talk. I don't like the image of Asian women sitting quietly in the back of the classroom and I tried to break it by talking about my own personal experiences in class. But I was always discouraged. So I decided to get out of public policy field."

The experience seems to repeat itself in professional education as this student continued to describe: "In the teacher education program, I have to fight to have others listen to me. I feel like I'm being talked down to from a condescending attitude. I very rarely speak up now. I am more of an observer and am somewhat afraid to speak up because I wonder what other people are going to think. Also true for other minority students. Many are

reluctant and won't speak up. There is a condescending attitude toward the minority teacher candidates." Her observation confirmed Goodlad's (1990) recognition that the small number of individuals from minority groups who choose to enter teacher education programs commonly encounter either segregation or repetition of the minority experience characterizing their earlier schooling. Several earlier studies also found that in general white teachers gave less attention and less encouragement to minority students, and that they ignored more minority students' statements (Irvine, 1988; King, 1993; Murrell, 1990).

Entry Perspectives: Reasons for Entering or Not Entering the Professions

There are both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for entering a human service profession. According to Lortie (1975), extrinsic rewards include what we usually think of as the "earnings" attached to a role and involve money income, a level of prestige, and power over others, while intrinsic or psychic rewards consist entirely of subjective valuations made in the course of work engagement. Our interview data revealed that the Asian American students from education and medical schools chose to enter the fields primarily for traditional altruistic and humanitarian reasons, such as "like people," "help others," and "serve the society." Three of the teacher candidates also demonstrated a sense of social justice, criticized the existing school systems, and expressed the need to "make a difference" when they became teachers.

The law students, on the other hand, seemed to have come into their professional training with more pragmatic reasons such as "tired of doing something else," "hated other subjects," "law school does not require specialized undergraduate degree." Two mentioned that they entered law schools because their families wished them to and wanted to have a lawyer in the family. No one mentioned any altruistic or humanitarian reasons. Clearly there is a significant difference in entry perspectives between the law students and the medical and education students.

Regardless of what the students thought when they made the decisions to enter the professions, all their parents seemed to be concerned primarily with the extrinsic rewards of the professions, namely, the prestige and income that different professions can bring to the students and their families. Our data revealed that while the parents of students in law and medical schools were generally happy about their choices because of the high status and economic rewards of those professions, the parents of students in teacher education unanimously opposed their decisions primarily for the low prestige and low pay of the teaching profession. Since Asian Amer-

ican parents often make phenomenal sacrifices to pay for their children's education and since the cohesiveness of the family and filial piety are integral aspects of many Asian cultures, Asian American parents have very strong influence on their children's education and career choices. Although our teacher candidates were able to persuade their families to support their decisions, the parents still hoped that they would change their minds later to enter law, medicine, science, or other more prestigious and higher-paying professions. And we can safely assume that many Asian American students have been persuaded by their families not to choose teaching as a profession, as evidenced in these remarks from the teacher candidates:

> In the beginning, my parents, sister, relatives and friends kept asking me 'Are you sure?'
>
> Not many said 'it's great!' Not much support from them. It was for the money reason.
>
> My parents were farmers in Japan, poor, and hard to live. So they want me to be well off. They still hope that I'll change my mind to go into law for monetary reasons. Among my Asian American friends, I am the only one who is going into teaching.
>
> There is a strong pressure for Asian-Americans to pursue professional status careers such as medicine and law, and there is a stigma against the teaching profession. Asians are materialistic. To them, low pay means low respect. Many people questioned my career choices and it led me to doubt my decision to become a teacher. Minorities are often seeking to elevate their status and becoming a teacher won't accomplish this. They tend to have a desire to overcompensate for their minority status by achieving.
>
> My friends say, 'I love to go into teaching, but I don't want to be poor.' There are a lot of family pressures for us to go into science, law, and medicine. Personally, I struggled with whether or not it would be good for me to go into teaching with all the sacrifices in money, time, and energy that teaching requires.

Some Asian American students noted that the opposition from Asian American families was not so much a lack of respect for the teaching profession as many came from countries with a long tradition of respect for teachers, but a result of the cultural differences between Asian countries and the American society:

> If I want to become a teacher in Vietnam, my parents would have been proud. Teachers in this culture are not well respected, and they have a hard life. This is why many Vietnamese don't want their children to become teachers here.

> It is because of society's negative perceptions of the profession. Teaching is not respected and is not a well-paid occupation. Teachers are considered failures, and teaching is considered a total turn off. It's not a valued profession compared to others such as being a doctor. Teaching is regarded by many as something you do if you can't do anything else.

These are important observations because on the surface it appears that many Asian parents, in fact all for the teacher candidates in our sample, openly and strongly oppose their children's decisions to enter teaching even though they have come from cultures that respect and value teachers (Endo, 1990). However, we need to recognize that the problem is deeply rooted in the cultural values and social structure of the American society, which do not place teachers in their deserved high status with comparable respect and rewards. Recruiting more minority candidates into teaching will remain an empty slogan if we do not make an effort to counter the negative social and individual perception of teaching as a profession of low status and minimal reward, as Leonard (1988) has warned us.

Besides concerns over the money and status issues, which loom large as the major factors positively influence Asian American students' decisions to enter law and medicine and negatively influence their decisions to enter teaching, the students in our sample also cited the lack of role models—minority faculty and staff in K-12 schools and higher education including their professional education—as a significant deterrent, as an Asian American education student observed: "They might not even consider teaching as an option because they don't see many (if any) members of their ethnicity in the schools." Our finding is consistent with that from Gordon's (1994) study of minority teachers, which also found the lack of positive minority role models in schools as a main reason students of color are not entering the field of teaching. A law student in our sample also indicated that the lack of minority role models in the law profession led to tunnel vision for otherwise prospective law students from minority groups.

Negative experiences in earlier schooling and lack of access to high-quality knowledge constitute another obstacle to minorities who might consider entering human service professional schools, according to a few students interviewed. Although most of the students in our sample regarded their K-12 schooling experiences as positive and successful, most of them were aware of the fact that a very large number of minority students had had bad experiences in schools and as a result had decided against entering the educational field to develop their own future careers, or they had such poor educational opportunities at lower levels they never made it to college. The existing climate for diversity on the university campus can also positively or negatively affect Asian American students' career choices.

Although the students in our sample were attracted to the professional training programs partly because of the high level of minority student enrollment on the campus, they noted the lack of faculty diversity and the absence of a curriculum that represents their interests, a problem also discovered in other studies (Castro & Ingle, 1991; Hood & Parker, 1994). One medical student offered a compelling example: "In my first year psychiatry class, I found a certain obstacle in the fact that Western psychiatry is fundamentally based on ways that Western people think. A lot of the Asian American students and I had a difficult time with that. We didn't share the same Western 'common sense'." As a result, some of the students in our study felt excluded from the mainstream group, not encouraged to participate in class discussions, which were dominated by white students, and found it very difficult to relate to faculty members from the mainstream group. Our finding is consistent with that from previous studies on campus climate and interracial relationships (Allen, 1988; Castro & Ingle, 1991; Hsia, 1988; Loo & Rolison, 1986; Nettles, 1986; Sanders, 1987). The conclusions are inescapable—the climate for minorities in higher education institutions including teacher education can be more alienating than involving, which constitutes a major barrier for the minority students who plan to enter professional schools and who are already in the preparation programs.

Attitudes Toward Teaching, Law, and Medicine as Professions

While law and medicine have long been recognized as fully-established professions with high status and generous rewards in the American society, there is much controversy about whether teaching qualifies as a profession (Su, 1986). More often than not, teaching is construed as a "semi-profession" (Howsam, 1976) or "the not-quite profession" with low status and poor compensations (Goodlad, 1990). The Asian American students in the present study did not seem to be aware of the controversy as all of them expressed the belief that law, medicine and teaching should all be considered as professions. However, they differed in some significant ways in their conceptualizations about what characterizes their chosen professions. The medical students were the most confident and thoughtful in defining medicine as a profession, as illustrated by this student: "We define 'profession' not only as something requiring more schooling, but a discipline in itself, which requires extensive training and has its own internal standards and goals set by its own community of practitioners, and yes, medicine fits this definition."

The teacher candidates under the study, although aware of the low status and poor rewards of the teaching profession, still believed very strongly

that teaching was a profession because of the nature of the work and the necessary knowledge and training needed for it: "Yes, teaching is a profession. Those who say 'no' have not taught a class. Teachers have to be researchers, counselors, nurses, public liaisons. Needs a lot of skills. Heavy responsibilities for children. Requires training and knowledge." One teacher candidate expressed her concern that if we continued to allow "shortcuts" such as emergency credentials for teaching to exist, people would think it was easy to become a teacher and looked on it as a fallback option. All teacher candidates believed that teaching was a complex profession that required many skills and knowledge and that had strong impact on the students. They strongly supported education reformers' call to improve the status of the teaching profession and to establish more professional requirements for teachers.

In comparison to the rather elaborate arguments for their chosen fields as professions from the medical and education students, the law students offered very simple descriptions of law as a profession and cited "requirement for special training and preparation" as the major characteristic of the profession. Two law students also commented that law was a profession because it was a way to make money. Such simplicity resembles that in their entry perspectives. One explanation is perhaps the lack of emphasis on the so-called "peripheral subjects," the foundation courses—legal philosophy or legal history (Kennedy, 1982)—where students might have the opportunity to explore, develop, and refine their fundamental beliefs and values regarding their chosen profession.

Commitment to Teaching, Law, and Medicine as Lifelong Careers

Given the lack of humanitarian reasons in law students' entry perspectives and the absence of meaningful definitions of their chosen profession, it was not surprising to find that none of the law students in our sample intended to take law as a lifelong career. They cited reasons such as "stress," "long hours," "lack of personal time," "boredom," "dissatisfaction," "tedious and petty," "little reward," "burn out," "unattractive mentality of lawyers," and "can't defend both sides of a point" as reasons for them to leave the profession. In some ways, the students viewed law education as a springboard for them to go elsewhere. Two of them planned to switch to school teaching, one wanted to go into business, and two did not specify what they would do after leaving the profession. Ironically, at the same time they planned to leave the profession, they all recognized the need to recruit more minority students into the profession so as to serve as role models and to bring more social justice to the poor and the minority people.

In contrast, all the five Asian American medical students in our study planned to take medicine as lifelong careers. A major reason for such strong commitment was the fact that the students actually enjoyed what they were learning in the preparation program and they perceived job satisfaction in the future. One also noted that doctors were like the source of knowledge in the community that people would look up to for advice. In addition, after investing so much time and resource into medical education, the students did not want to waste knowledge and they saw little possibility to change careers.

The Asian American teacher candidates' commitment to their chosen profession differed from both medical and law students. Two students had decided to take teaching as lifelong careers, one wanted to switch to law, or business or politics so that she could advocate for the minority people, and two students expressed uncertainty about their plans to teach and how long they wanted to teach. This finding is consistent with that from the national Study of the Education of Educators—the SEE (Su, 1993), which uncovered that only half of the nearly 3,000 teacher candidates surveyed planned to take teaching as lifelong careers. Three of the education students in our sample considered the lack of administrative support for innovation and change a major cause for leaving teaching. "Having kids," "frustration," "loss of challenge and interest," "burnout," "lack of fulfillment," and "the need to prove something to self" were also cited as possible reasons for minority teachers to leave the teaching profession. Again, our finding corresponds with that from the SEE (Su, 1993).

Sources of Influence on Becoming Professionals

In examining the socialization experiences of Asian American students in professional schools, we focused on the sources of influence with an emphasis on the relationships and interactions among major participants in the socialization process, based on a framework developed by the author in her previous study of teacher socialization (Su, 1992). We believe that as the students participate in communities, they actively construct meanings and significance of their encounters. Our interview data revealed interesting differences in socialization experiences among Asian American students in different professional schools. The teacher candidates all considered their peers in the same team as the most significant source of influence. In general, teacher trainees go through the preparation programs without being members of a close-knit cohort group and peers are considered as having very weak influences on their professional development, as has been discovered in the author's national study of teacher socialization (Su, 1992). However, the teacher training program under the

study has adopted a cohort approach and all teacher candidates belong to a team of 30 students with one supervising faculty and two clinical consultants (doctoral students who were experienced school teachers). They spend much time together both formally and informally, thus developing a very strong bond and support system among themselves. Nevertheless, the students interviewed expressed the concern that there was no sense of community in the overall teacher education program. Furthermore, the students tended to form small cliques along racial and ethnic lines. All the teacher candidates in our sample said that they interacted and made friends mostly with people of the same ethnicity or with other people of color. There was a keen sense of segregation and exclusion from the mainstream group.

The teacher education students viewed their interactions and relationships with education professors as "very limited," "minimal" and "restricted to formal settings." They observed that neither themselves nor the professors had taken the initiative to communicate with each other. As a research-oriented institution, teacher education was not the priority in the graduate school of education and only few education professors are actively involved in teacher education. When asked if there was a man or woman on the staff who was just the kind of teacher they would like to be, only one student mentioned a non-tenure track lecturer, who was described to be very well organized, able to present materials in a clear manner, and who had a comfortable and supportive relationships with the students. The students expressed the desire to have more interactions with the professors. Two students who had some extensive interaction with individual faculty members felt that the faculty had significant influences on their beliefs regarding teaching and schooling. In an earlier study of teacher socialization, informal interactions between students and professors were seen as having great influence on the development of becoming teachers (Su, 1992). Clearly, efforts need to be made to get more professors involved in the formal and informal socialization of teacher candidates, especially minority students who have difficulty and few opportunities to interact with them.

All the teacher candidates interviewed were at the end of their student teaching assignments. Although earlier studies of teacher socialization frequently ranked cooperating teachers/supervising teachers in practice schools and the student teaching experience as the most significant source of influence on becoming teachers (Conant, 1963; Horowitz, 1968; Lortie, 1975; Su, 1992), the subjects in the present study did not consider them as more powerful an influence than their peers and team supervising faculty and staff. They viewed their relationships with cooperating teachers as good, supportive and interactive. However, two of them felt the restrictions

and pressures from the cooperating teachers to do things their ways rather than to experiment with things they wanted to do.

The law students in our sample also went through the program in cohort groups but only two students felt that peers/friends were the most significant source of influence. Two cited professors and supervisors for internship as the more significant factors and one student considered her boyfriend, who was a law graduate student, as the most important influential force in her life as a becoming lawyer. Three students reported that they had made a lot of friends across ethnic groups, but two of them added that there were factions and cliques among students along the racial lines and that there was a sense of community among minority students only. This situation is very similar to that for education students as described above. One student observed that the peer culture among law students was very balkanized due to forced competitiveness and worsening job market. The professors used a very competitive grading-on-curve system, which affected cooperative relationships among the students. Most of the students were not sure if they would keep in touch with their peers/friends after the completion of the program. Like teacher candidates, the law students viewed their relationships with professors as very formal, limited, and restricted to the formal classroom settings. Students in general had no outside contact with the professors or "as little interaction as possible." The students recognized that law was a "male-dominated profession and world" and the female law students felt the particular need to have female role models. In many ways, the law school's hierarchical structure and formal relationships resemble those at the work place (Elkins, 1985) and the interactions in the socialization process tend to create tension and anxiety in the students.

One of the law students in our sample felt that although the program had successfully diversified the student population, as the education school and medical school on this campus had, the students were still being evaluated on the mainstream standards. The minority students had great difficulty with having to argue the other point, and they came to see the legal system valueless. This helps explain why none of the law students in our sample planned to take law as lifelong careers. Moreover, the law students noted that there was minimal help for minorities, particularly with adjustment. There was also a lack of diversity in the faculty. The students in our sample believed that professional schools should provide special assistance to minority students. They suggested that special summer programs should be developed for minority students.

In comparison to the law students, the medical students in our sample reported much more positive socialization experiences, which may have contributed to their firm commitment to medicine as lifelong careers. The medical students also went through their training program in cohorts and

all of them considered peers to be among the most significant sources of influence, a finding similar to that in the previous studies of peer influence in medical schools (Becker, et al., 1961). The students described their relationships and interactions as highly positive and very close, a strong feeling of shared ordeal and destiny: "There is a sense of being chosen to be together. Moving toward a common goal. For 8 hours a day together in class. Less competitive because everyone is guaranteed a job, not like law, and the grading is not based on a curve. We are very close. It's almost impossible for anyone outside of the medical world to understand what we have to go through. You'd really have to go through it yourself to understand it all!" "We know that we will be lifelong friends. We do a lot together in addition to going to classes. About a dozen of us are going to Europe together. In the future we'll all be working in the same general area and can refer our patients to one another! We will always be very close..."

Clearly, the friendship developed among medical students is much stronger and more lasting than that among education and law students. In addition, the medical students seem to be able to cross the racial borders to develop genuine understanding and friendly relationships with students from both minority and mainstream groups, which the education students and law students were not able to accomplish in their programs. With regard to their relationships with the professors, the medical students described formal and professional contacts with little individual attention. But the interactions with clinical professors in the third and fourth year became more frequent, less formal, and more cordial. In addition, the students pointed out that the way to get to know professors was through research or working with them.

Not all the students had such opportunities. Four of the medical students interviewed said they had not met anyone on the faculty who was just the kind of professional that they wanted to become. But the fifth one identified a worthy role model from the faculty: "There is a doctor here that is very hard working, caring, and everything ... His patients love him because he can get along on their level. He helps out wherever he can and is extremely friendly. He helps out wherever he can. Even though there is so much ranking, he doesn't look down on me. He treats me as if I were his equal or colleague. I like that!" It is clear that we need to have more professional educators who can serve as role models for the students—who do not lose sight of the important human values while busying themselves in the ruthless "publish or perish" races in the existing academic world, and who value the becoming professionals as their equals.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR REFORM AND RESEARCH

Findings from this case study of Asian American students in selected human service professional schools indicate notable differences in the family backgrounds of teacher education students and law and medicine students. The education students tend to come from lower socioeconomic status than their peers in law and medicine, their parents have fewer years of education, earn less and work at lower status jobs than is true for the law and medicine students. We believe that this reflects the general pattern of discrepancy in family backgrounds between students in education and those in law and medical schools.

Immigration status may also be a factor here as we have discovered that the Asian American students in law and medical schools are more likely to be born and raised in Asian countries while their counterparts in education tend to be born and raised in the local areas in the United States. It may be possible that the first-generation Asian immigrants push their children harder to get into the more prestigious and higher-paying professions in order to achieve the kind of material success and prosperity that many of them came to this country for. More empirical data need to be gathered from larger samples to test this hypothesis.

Regardless of their status and education, the parents of all the subjects in our study expect their children to achieve high levels of education and to obtain graduate and professional degrees. This is not surprising given the high values placed on education in the Asian cultural tradition. However, while the parents for the students in the law and medical schools were in general happy and supportive of their children's decisions to enter the professional programs because of the high status and lucrative pay enjoyed by the law and medical professions, the education students' parents unanimously opposed to their decisions to enter teaching because of the low status and poor compensations associated with the teaching profession. It must be understood that these parents do value teachers and the education profession as demonstrated by the respect they show to their children's teachers at all educational levels. They would probably support their children's decisions to become teachers in their home countries, but not in the United States where teaching does not receive its deserved status, respect, and compensations, and teaching as a career does not fit into the image and definition of success in the American society. The time-honored saying, "Those who can, do, and those who can't, teach," runs wide and deep and still rings true for many (Ryan & Cooper, 1995). Reform measures need to be taken to significantly improve the status of the teaching profession before the individual perceptions of teaching as a profession of

low status and minimal rewards can be altered not only in Asian American parents' minds, but also in the minds of the general public.

All our subjects had positive and successful educational experiences in K-12 schools and undergraduate studies, which contributed to their motivation to enter highly selective human service professional schools. However, they were aware of the unequal educational opportunities for a large number of minority including Asian American students in the existing educational system. They also noted that the existing curriculum and faculty at all levels of schooling did not represent the best interests of the poor and minority people. More than half of our subjects experienced some kind of discrimination because of their ethnicity, culture and language, mostly in subtle forms, in their educational and social encounters. The myth of the "model minority" also created uncomfortable situations for Asian American students, both the "smart" and the "slow" ones. Moreover, the lack of role models—minority educators and professionals—was considered as a serious problem by our subjects. Clearly, Asian American students are very sensitive to diversity issues and very concerned about the representation of minority in the educational and professional fields. They can serve as a major force in our efforts to restructure the educational system and the human service professions. And we should help them to learn to become self-conscious role models for minority children and youth.

In defining the purposes and characteristics of their chosen professions, the education and medical students in our sample presented thoughtful illustrations and made strong arguments about the human and intellectual dimensions of the professional work. In contrast, the law students offered only simplistic descriptions focused on the pragmatic features of the legal work. The differences here parallel those in the entry perspectives between education and medical students and law students: the former cited more intrinsic rewards—altruistic and humanitarian reasons, while the latter emphasized the extrinsic factors—the pragmatic reasons. The very weak emphasis on foundation courses in the law schools may have contributed to the lack of idealism in law students, as some researchers suggest (Kennedy, 1982). Consequently none of the law students in our sample planned to take law as a lifelong career whereas all the medical students and half of the education students made commitment to their chosen professions as lifelong careers. The students cited various reasons for them to leave the professions, with "stress," "burnout," and "frustration" being the major reasons. Advocates for minority representation in the major human service professions must take these findings seriously if they want to retain Asian Americans in the professions, especially in law and education. Foundation courses in professional schools should play a significant role in helping minority candidates explore, develop, and refine their fundamental beliefs and values regarding their chosen professions.

There are interesting differences in the socialization experiences among Asian American students in different professional schools. Although all our subjects went through their training programs in cohorts, the medical students developed a strong feeling of shared ordeal and destiny among themselves, which the education and law students failed to establish. The medical students were also able to form close friendship across ethnic lines as well as with students from the mainstream group whereas the education and law students socialized and made friends mainly with students from their own or other ethnic groups. Close association with peers from all racial groups seems to have a very positive effect on the morale of the Asian American medical students: they want to remain lifelong friends and they are all firmly committed to medicine as lifelong careers. Professional educators in education and law schools can draw useful lessons from medical school socialization experiences in order to foster similar, positive experiences for their own trainees.

In regard to their interaction and relationships with professors and field supervisors, the Asian American students in all three professional schools under the study described mostly formal and limited contacts with little individual attention. The students in education and law schools, in particular, felt it difficult to approach and communicate with the mainstream faculty. They demanded the diversity of faculty, especially at the higher levels of the academic hierarchy. What they appeared to enjoy or desired to have was a kind of less formal, more cordial, and more frequent interactions with their professors and supervisors. They valued the opportunities to participate in research projects with the faculty and they considered as worthy role models those professional educators who would treat them as equals and friends.

Clearly, efforts need to be made to get more faculty members, both from the mainstream and minority groups, involved in the formal and informal socialization of the becoming professionals, especially minority candidates who have had few opportunities to interact with them on individual bases. There is also the need to design and conduct more in-depth comparative studies on the perspectives and socialization experiences of different minority groups in order to improve the educational experiences of minority students and to increase the representation of minorities in all the major professions in the American society.

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CHAPTER 9

KOREAN ADOPTED YOUNG WOMEN:

GENDER BIAS, RACIAL ISSUES, AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

John D. Palmer

By most accounts, gender equity for women in the United States has continued to improve throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century (e.g., equal opportunity in the workforce, college education in fields once predominantly attended by males, etc.). As we enter a new millennium, however, it is clear that gender equity—while considerably improved—continues to be a goal, not a fact, in the lives of many women and schoolgirls. A 1991 study, commissioned by the American Association of University Women determined that beginning in middle school, schoolgirls generally display a decline in their academic achievement. In a follow-up study, the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation and Wellesley College Center for Research on Women (1992) concluded that a direct link between academic decline in middle schoolgirls and a distinct drop in their self-esteem and confidence. These studies "awakened the nation" and inspired educators, journalists, and psychologists to further investigate the consequences of gender bias in U.S. schools (American Association of University Women and Greenberg-Lake Analysis Group, 1991, p. 4).

The American Association of University Women and Greenberg-Lake Analysis Group (1991) and the American Association of University Women Educational Foundation and Wellesley College Center for Research on Women (1992) reports, like many before it, chose to divide schoolgirls into three distinct and predictable categories: Latina, African American, and White. While Asian American young women and schoolgirls are certainly susceptible to the same nature of gender bias experienced by the others considered for these studies, they were absent from the dialogue.

In an attempt to add to the existing literature on gender and education, this paper explored the educational and social experiences of Asian American young women. Specifically, the research focused on Korean adopted young women's (university students and schoolgirls) experiences in their schools, communities, and families and how gender bias and racism affected their racial identity development.

INTRODUCTION

Korean adopted young women face a number of challenges in their attempts to overcome gender bias and racism in American society. In particular, their unique backgrounds may compel these women to decide which culture to identify—either Korean or White American. Their choices on which group to identify appears to be limited. In the white community, where the majority of these adoptees live, they tend to be viewed as racial minorities—different based upon their physical appearance. And in the Korean/Asian American community, they generally lack sufficient knowledge of Korean/Asian American culture. Thereby, one of their most difficult struggles seems to be in their attempts to gain acceptance (fit in) in either one of the communities (as well as other communities represented in the United States).

The majority of Korean adoptees are likely to be left little choice in constructing their racial and ethnic identities. They may feel obligated to join the white majority culture by virtue of their white, middle class nurturing (Mullen, 1995). At the same time, most adoptees lack the cultural foundations to completely join their birth culture. This may be due, in part, to an insufficient amount of awareness and understanding of their Korean ethnicity (Kim, 1977, 1978).

Families who adopt transculturally/internationally typically have little knowledge of their child's racial and ethnic heritage, leading some parents to disregard this aspect in their child's life (Kim, 1977, 1978; Kim, Hong, & Kim, 1979). The neglect of a transculturally adopted child's ethnic heritage could be conceived as an attempt on behalf of the white adoptive parents to convert their child into an "American" as quickly as possible so that she is

able to adjust and feel secure in her new environment.[1] I recognize that some parents attempt to expose their adopted child to their birth culture. However, because parents' efforts are usually sporadic and the parents possess limited knowledge of their child's cultural heritage, the child is often unsuccessful and/or unwilling to embrace their birth culture (Kim, 1995).

While the majority of Korean transcultural adoptees adjust well to their new environment, most are uncomfortable with their appearance, feel ashamed of their origin, and/or show little desire to learn about their ethnic culture. Consequently, they have a tendency to disassociate themselves from their Korean heritage (Kallgren & Caudill, 1993; Kim, 1978; Kim, 1995). Disassociation may be attributed to the inadequate amount of positive exposure adoptees have to Korean culture. Further, the inferior status Korean and other racial minorities typically are ascribed to in the United States may contribute to adoptees' negative ideals of Korea and Korean culture (Kim, 1978; Kim, 1995). As a result, most seem to hold little pride in being Korean and tend to exhibit an inclination to join the white dominant culture (Kim, 1978).

In my discussions with adoptees, both prior to and during this study, most described themselves as a banana; yellow on the outside (appearance) and white on the inside (culture). This self-identity may come as a result from the social pressures they experienced from the time of their adoption in which they grew up learning white dominant attitudes and behaviors, yet society constantly stereotyped them as Asians who were foreign-born and have little or no claim to the rights of a white American citizen (Du Bois, 1969; Tuan, 1997). In a sense, this feeling of being marginalized by society relates to Du Bois' (1969) double-consciousness, where the adoptee is usually "looking at oneself through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (p. 45). This notion of double-consciousness may deprive adoptees of their choice to identify as an "American" or "Korean."

Through this exploratory research project, I attempted to acquire a greater understanding of how Korean adopted young women developed a racial identity as they experienced gender bias and racial issues in their communities. In order to gain further insight into their lives, I conducted eight open-ended interviews with Korean adopted young women and girls ranging in age of 14–22 years old. The interview schedule was broad enough to allow the respondents the freedom to discuss their experiences they faced in middle school, high school, and universities. The university women were requested to recall situations of their middle and high school years as well as discuss their present circumstances. The schoolgirls were asked to discuss their present situations and their lives as elementary and middle school students. In addition, I spent time with the participants in their homes, schools, and communities.

At the end of each day, I withdrew from the community to transcribe notes and interview tapes. The transcripts and field notes were coded using multicolored post-its. Sentences, phrases, paragraphs, and whole sections were coded using a specific colored post-it. As patterns began to emerge from the data and as I continued to sift through the data, these codes were modified as more field notes and transcripts were analyzed. Some of the codes were blended into one, some were eliminated completely, and new codes emerged. Using these strategies and the coding methods, I reasoned that I was able to reach conclusions "that responds to the question that guided the study in the first place and that is sufficiently coherent and comprehensible so that it can be communicated to a variety of audiences" (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999, p. 148).

The eight participants in this study lived in the Midwest region of the United States. Michelle, Catie, and Ana were sophomores in three different high school. Christine, Sarah, Sophie, and Julie all attended the same predominantly white university. Emma was the only middle school student. The young women in this study were successful in their academics and active in extracurricular activities in their schools and universities. For the most part, they did not recognize any differences between themselves and any other students except for their Korean adoptee background. Some of the young women displayed signs of an acceptance of their Korean ethnic background, while others continued to struggle with their racial identity.

The following sections delve into four main topics for discussion: (1) understanding/encountering racial issues; (2) isolation and invisibility; (3) finding acceptance; and (4) accepting Korean, Adopted, and American identities. These topics were not the only ones discussed by the participants. However, they were the topics that the participants chose to talk about more frequently than others. More important, these topics imply significant factors that educators, parents, and community members should be aware of in order to provide a safe and comfortable learning/developing environment.

UNDERSTANDING AND CONFRONTING RACIAL ISSUES

One of the overall themes that emerged from the data was the respondents' confrontation with racial issues in their schools and communities. Derman-Sparks and Phillips (1997) believe that racism "is measured by its outcomes for people of color, rather than its intentions" (p. 22). They continued by stating that:

> While racist behavior does not exist outside the system of institutionalized racism, the system cannot exist outside of individual actions. Human beings

> are products of the society into which they are born, but they are also actors who bring institutional relationships to life and hence have the potential for influencing and changing these relationships. Individuals thus contribute to both the maintenance and the evolution of a racist system. In these dynamic interactions lies the mechanism for either perpetuation of racism or its transformation. (pp. 22–23)

Similarly, Scheurich and Young (1997) conclude that racism exists on four levels: overt/covert (individual); institutional; societal; and civilizational. The young women in this study frequently discussed encountering individual acts of racial harassment in their schools, communities, and in their extended families. However, through these discussions, it appeared that the participants were unaware of how issues pertaining to race affected their lives on a broader scale. For example, the young women did not appear to be able to conceptualize how "institutions or organizations, including educational ones, have standard operating procedures (intended or unintended) that hurt members of one or more races in relation to members of the dominant race" (institutional racism) (Scheurich & Young, 1997, p. 5). Moreover, they did not converse with me about how "societal or cultural assumptions, norms, concepts, habits, expectations, etc. favor one race over one or more other races" (societal racism) (p. 6). They possessed awareness that U.S. society favors whites over that of other races. They appeared to be accustomed to the norms of whites because they essentially grew up living under white dominant cultural practices in their homes. As a result, they typically believed in white values. Moreover, they were, for the most part, unable to determine "the privileging of one view over others" because their points of view were usually shaped by the privileged (whites), typically through their parents' and community's teachings (p. 6).

Most acts of racism that the participants chose to talk about were nonviolent, subtle acts, which were typically racial slurs thrown directly at them or racial taunts toward other people of color in their presence. More often then not, these overt acts of racism were from male peers, yet the young women's closest female friends were more prone to committing subtle acts of discrimination.

Racial harassment often left the young women feeling ashamed of being Korean. As a result, it appeared that their self-esteem and confidence were directly affected by these racial attacks. Typically the participants talked about how they were unable to confront their harassers because they were usually alone when one or more boys were harassing them. For example, Michelle elaborated on a story where two white boys harassed her while she was alone in front of the school waiting for her father to pick her up after band practice. She shared:

> They [two boys] were saying "Chinks," and they were calling me all these names. They kept on me and I was thinking to myself, "No, I don't want to hear this, you're wrong." And they just kept going at it, just kept following me around. I tried to get as far away from them and leave them behind me and not believe what they said … I kept trying to think that it's because they don't understand [racial differences]. Therefore, I should not believe them … They were hurting me. I was crying.

Harassers were typically people the participants went to school with yet, at times, their closest friends also made racist remarks in their presence. It seemed as though some of the young women were able to question their peers' racist attitude when remarks were not thrown directly at them. Emma, for example, described a time when she was able to confront her peers who were making racist comments. She stated that:

> There are people that I'm not really friend with, who are really judgmental. They never say anything directly to my face, but if they make fun of somebody else that's a different race, I'll be thinking, "What difference is that from making fun of me?" … Some of my friends, they'll make jokes about Chinese people and I get really mad about that. I tell them, "Guys, that's really mean." And they'll be like, "Well, we're not making fun of you." And I'll be like, "But I'm Asian too, so in a way you are."

While Emma was able to speak out against her peers making derogatory statements about Asians, most of the time the participants talked about situations that did not allow them stand up against their peers who were either directly harassing them or making insulting statements about Asians in general. The young women in this study talked about how they felt as though they could not confront their peers who were belittling Asians. These overtly forms of harassment appeared to hurt the participants' self-esteem and confidence. However, unlike the majority of other young women of color, Korean adopted Americans found little refuge from the predominantly white environment in which they were immersed because they were being raised in white households. This loneliness began in their families as they felt that their parents were not able to understand how they really felt when confronted with racism in their schools and communities. Michelle stated that sometimes she tried to talk with her parents about being racially harassed but felt that they could not do anything about. She stated, "If I told my mom, she'd be like, 'Well, just ignore them or tell them that you're not a chink.'" This was a typical response from the participants' parents, which in the minds of the participants was not sufficient. Catie also believed that by talking with her mother about racial taunting at school would not comfort her because, "She'd say, 'Oh, well some people

are just like that.' And I wouldn't really say anymore because you can always say you understand but I don't think she would have."

For the most part, the participants realized that their parents were not able to understand what being a member of the minority felt like, especially in a predominantly white environment. They were able to recognize that their parents were members of the dominant white race and therefore were not able to relate to their experiences of being racially harassed. As a result, some of the participants attempted to seek advice from their white peers.

When the participants attempted to talk with their white friends about racism, they also found little comfort. Ana best described the mixed feelings she had with her white friends and her need for acceptance in the group as well as recognition of her Asian heritage. She revealed that:

> I tell my friends that I'm having trouble at school because I don't think people accept me because I'm different. [They say] "Why [Ana]? Everybody thinks of you as not being Asian." I'm always telling them I don't feel as good as everyone else because I'm Asian and they're always telling me, "But we don't look at you as Asian. We just look at you as [Ana] and you're like us." And I'm like, but I'm not like you. I guess that bugs me after they say that … When I hear the word "gook" and things like that used for Koreans and Asians in general, I don't feel very good because I always think that they are saying it toward me. Even though they always saying "[Ana], it's not toward you. We're just talking about Asians." "Well, I am Asian."

Catie also felt as though her white friends were unable to understand racism because they could not possibly feel the pain that came with being ostracized because of their race. She stated, "They [her friends] say, 'Oh I totally understand.' But, No you don't, you've never been called a chink, you're white, and you belong."

Unable to feel secure in talking with their parents and white friends about how racism negatively affects their lives, some participants were left to resolve their problems on their own. Racism added to their confusion about where they "fit in" and some began to feel as though no place was right for them. The following section delves into the isolation these young women felt inside their school, community, and at times in their homes.

ISOLATION AND INVISIBILITY

The Korean adopted young women in the study lived in or grew up in small towns or middle sized cities with few other Asian Americans. In addition, four of the participants were the only Korean children in their homes, while the other four had at least one other sibling adopted from Korea. The participants were quick to point out their isolation within their

schools and communities with statements like: "There was only one other Asian girl in my class"; "There's only two other Asian people in my grade"; and "I'll usually notice 95% of the time that I'm the only Asian or especially if I'm the only minority." However, since the young women were all adopted at an early age (all before the age of 10), most of their close friends appeared to accept them as "one of them," an American.

With an acceptance of being considered "one of them," also came invisibility for most the young women in the study. The Korean adoptees' friends and peers often did not acknowledge that there was an Asian American in the classroom. For example, Julie stated, "We were talking about minorities in my social studies class and one of my classmates said, 'We have a minority in the class.' Which one boy replied, 'Where?'" Furthermore, some of the participants believed that with their childhood friends typically felt as though their Korean background did not make much difference in their relationships. As a result, a comfort zone was established. This comfort zone was where the young women felt as though they were accepted by their closest peers for who they were and not based upon their racial and adopted backgrounds.

Catie talked about being accepted by her friends as though she was no different from them. She shared, "We knew each other well. They accepted me and I accepted them. They didn't make a big thing out of me being different. It's just like, 'You're just like one of us, and there's no big deal about you being Korean.'" Along the same theme, Julie reflected upon her time in high school. She told me that:

> I was pretty much accepted as being Asian. I don't think that I felt much different from many of the other students. With the friends I was with it didn't affect me so much being Asian. I was in a group of friends that accepted who I was. We lived in our own little world, our own little bubble. I could be Asian and it didn't matter.

When these young women left their comfort zones, (e.g., leave for college, a trip out of town, a move to a new school district) they believed that their Asian physical features were noticed before all their other qualities. For example, in their middle schools and high schools, the participants talked about how they were able to identify with certain groups, certain cliques among their friends (i.e., Emma, the cheerleader or Michelle, the violinist) and felt somewhat comfortable in their closed environment. Outside of their comfort zones, they talked about being stared at and bombarded with numerous inquiring questions about their racial and adopted backgrounds. The following excerpt from Michelle's interview exemplifies the fear of moving out of her comfort zone and into a new environment. She shared that:

> They [peers in elementary school] knew me and it wasn't that bad. I grew up with them. But then when I [moved to another school] I began thinking, "Now I'm going to have to go to another school with a whole bunch of other people and I'm going to have to start all over again, with the questions about being adopted. I don't want to have to always answer those questions. I didn't have to in elementary school.

Christine referred to her time when she first arrived on her college campus and how difficult it was for her to find a new identity away from her high school and hometown community. She stated that:

> It [Korean identity] just really has hit me since I've entered college. In high school it wasn't that big of a deal. I didn't really notice my Koreanness that much, just because everybody pretty much accepted me as an American. There weren't any other Asians for them to stereotype so they just accepted me as American, but she looks Korean, kind of thing. But when I arrived at college, there are so many different stereotypes, and now I'm surrounded a lot more by Americans. In high school and middle school, you always had the group, that certain clique. But now that I'm at college … no one.

By growing up in communities that were predominantly white and living in a household headed by two white parents, these young women talked frequently about having little choice but to assimilate into the white dominant culture. During this assimilation process, they told me that their closest friends tended to reinforce the belief that they were no different from the majority of people in the school and community. However, the young women were aware of their racial differences from the majority of the population. As a result, they had a tendency to want to be as invisible as possible so as not to draw any attention to their differences. Especially in their schools they rarely spoke out in their classes or drew teacher attention.

Most of the young women in this study were quiet in their classes, almost invisible to their teachers. Sadker and Sadker (1986, 1995) discussed the importance of teacher-student relationships and the need for girls to have their opinions heard in class. Research has also determined that schoolgirls gradually learn to feel self-conscious about their role in the classroom and begin to understand that speaking out may bring more negative repercussions than positive responses (AAUW and GLAG, 1991; Orenstein, 1994; Sadker & Sadker, 1986, 1995). Accordingly, schoolgirls may be fearful to join discussions due to the harassment and embarrassment in the occurrence of a wrong answer. Therefore, their speech becomes filled with qualifiers (e.g., I don't know or I guess so) as their confidence in expressing their opinions diminishes and in some cases nearly vanish (Orenstein, 1994; Sadker & Sadker, 1986, 1995).

Research has further shown that schoolgirls tend to lose their voice as the boys attempt, and are usually successful at, gaining the majority of the teacher's attention (AAUW & GLAG, 1991; AAUWEF & WCCRW, 1992; Orenstein, 1992; Pipher, 1992). Moreover, middle and high school boys have a tendency to gain control of the classroom, leaving schoolgirls to become the observers rather than participants (Eder, Evans, & Parker, 1995). In the following situation, Ana described a situation where several white male students and her teacher made derogatory comments about Asians in the classroom. She told me that this experience negatively affected confidence in herself and respect for her teacher. She painfully shared:

> In history class we were learning about the Tao Dynasty—Korea and China. We had to watch a video about China. The whole time there was that Asian music playing, like those chimes and things. I felt really uncomfortable because the white guys were making fun of it and everybody was laughing at their jokes but I was just sitting there looking down. And the teacher was even making fun of it. I felt so small … The whole time they were just making fun of Asians. But my teacher was laughing and that's what really bothered me.

Subtle acts of harassment left Ana, as well as the other young women, feeling as though they were unable to confront this type of negative behavior in the classroom. As a result, Ana told me that she felt as though she was "trying to hide" in the classroom, rather than express her opinions because she did not want her classmates to notice her—she did not want to stand out more than she was already. Thus, similar to most other schoolgirls' experiences, where they feel marginalized in the classroom, the participants also felt as though they lost their "voice" in the junior high and high school classroom (e.g., AAUW & GLAG, 1991; AAUWEF & WCCRW, 1992; Orenstein, 1992; Pipher, 1992).

The Korean adopted young women's loss of voice may have stemmed from how their peers sent mixed messages to them. On one hand they treated them as Americans. But, at the same time, their friends made negative remarks about Asians. The following explains one of the reasons why Catie did not want to participate in classroom discussions and activities. She commented that:

> I try not to stand out. I feel like I stand out so much already because I'm Korean. And I feel like, from middle school and elementary school, that whenever I did something or if I did something wrong people would always use being Korean as the excuse. If I'd start talking about something else then they'd be like, "Well, you're a chink." So I guess, habitually, I just try not to draw attention to myself.

Michelle believed that part of her wanting to remain quiet in the classroom was due to her already being a student who "stood out" from the rest. She stated, "It felt weird, different, because I was the only one. I stood out and everyone would know who I was because I was basically the only Asian girl in my whole class."

The participants also talked about wanting to conceal themselves from the questions asked by their peers and/or teachers when the topic of Asia was being discussed in the classroom. Margolis and Romero (1998) argue that "the paradoxical uniqueness of being both isolated and a spokesperson for one's group add to the hardships that women of color must endure during their graduate work" (p. 17). Similarly, for Korean adoptees, their isolation, mixed with an expectation of representing Koreans and Asian Americans, added to their frustrations and feelings of inadequacy in the classroom.

The respondents revealed that they did not possess enough knowledge of Asian cultures and histories to feel as though they could answer the many inquiring looks and questions they received from their classmates and teachers when Asian topics were being discussed. Michelle solidifies this point when she talked about her sense of self-shame for not knowing about Korean culture. She stated that:

> It's always when we're talking about Korea, if they [classmates] say something wrong they would ask, "Michelle, is that right?" And I'd answer, "I don't know." It's like I'm ashamed, because I don't know the answer. It's like I'm separate. I'm Korean but then I grew up in this white society … And I just feel really ashamed that I can't answer their questions.

Ana also described her feelings when her class was discussing topics about Asia. She told me that:

> When we started studying about Japan, or any other Asian country, I would get so nervous … I'd be afraid that everyone would look at me or ask me questions about the topic. I was afraid the teacher would ask me to say something about it and I would not know the answer because I wasn't taught about Asian cultures in my home, just like the other American students but they some how expected me to know the answers.

The young women in this study were looking for a place where they felt comfortable in their everyday lives similar to most girls who wanted to find comfort in their personal relationships (Griffiths, 1995). However, their unique backgrounds, as transcultural Korean adoptees, added to their isolation within their schools, communities, and families. For the most part they were alone in their search for acceptance in both the white and Asian/Korean American communities. They talked about how they were

viewed as Asians in the white community, which they believed excluded them from certain privileges (see McIntosh, 1988). On the other hand, in the Korean/Korean American community they believed that they lacked the language and cultural skills, which hindered their sense of belonging in this social group.

The pressure to be accepted by peers begins to control girls' decision-making process in a variety of ways (Pipher, 1994). The American Association of University Women Educational Foundation and Wellesley College Center for Research on Women (1992) discovered that "girls in sixth and seventh grade rated being popular and well-liked as being more important than being perceived as competent or independent" (p. 11). Moreover, according to Eder et al. (1995), popularity becomes more of an issue among girls than boys since popularity for boys stem from athletics and academic performance, while girls are judged almost solely on their appearance.

The contradictions are difficult for young women to decipher. Adhering to the pressures to find acceptance, Pipher (1994) discussed how some girls involve themselves in types of behavior that is both dangerous and socially unacceptable, which could lead to incarceration, hospitalization, pregnancy, and death in exchange for their happiness in being a part of a group. For the young women in the study, these contradictions also rang true in their lives. Although none of them talked about getting into "serious" trouble, some discussed their eating habits, wearing stylish clothes, and even participating in activities that were dangerous in order to find acceptance with their peers.

The pressure to find acceptance seemed to be difficult for the participants. They believed that they were not fully accepted by the white community because of their race. Additionally, they did not feel accepted by the Korean community because their adopted status did not allow them to understand Korean culture, rules, and behaviors.

SEARCHING FOR ACCEPTANCE

The young women in the study talked about the overwhelming need to fit in. Some of them attempted to dress in certain name brand clothing to find acceptance with the popular group, others chose to gain entry through participating in deviant activities, while others joined school-related extracurricular activities (e.g., cheerleading, band, chorus, sports, orchestra) to find a group of friends that would accept them. Their stories were not unlike those of other young women growing up in the United States as described in the gender related research (Orenstein, 1994; Pipher, 1994).

For example, Ana, who liked to dress in what she called the "preppy look," often talked about buying new clothes, the latest fashion, in order to gain some sense of belonging with a group of friends. Ana stated that, "My biggest challenge is just fitting in because every day I go to school I worry what someone is going to say about my hair or my clothes." However, when she felt as though clothes and style were not enough she experimented with deviant because she felt as though the "popular group" did not accept her because she did not fit the white, blonde hair, blue-eyed look that they all tended to have. She revealed that:

> I just wanted to fit in and that's when I started to hang out with more of the [deviant students] ... I'm not proud of that in any way but I guess I felt more relaxed when I did because I felt more accepted. Then when I grew out of it at the end of my freshman year, I just thought why did I do that? I wasted my whole freshman year trying to be something I'm not and I never wanted to be and then like the whole summer I was just trying to get back to being me.

Ana's story reflects that of other young women discussed in Pipher's (1994) book *Reviving Ophelia.* However, Ana, as well as the other respondents, felt an added pressure to fit in because their racial appearance and transcultural adopted background excluded them from feeling as though they were full members of their social groups. The young women discussed situations where they wanted to find acceptance as a full member of their family or group of friends, rather than being singled out as the "adopted one" or the "Asian one." Sarah exemplified this point when she stated, "'Beautiful China doll' they [family relatives] would say. I would cringe. I hated any reference to my obvious differences in the family. All I wanted to do was fit in." Sophie also recognized her differences and why she did not fit into the white community, "I felt like I didn't belong. I felt like I shouldn't be here. I felt like my life sucked. It kind of dawned on me that I'd never be white and that does matter to some people."

Finding acceptance may add to the dilemma of trying to maintain one's true self (Eder, et al., 1995; Griffiths, 1995; Orenstein, 1994; Pipher, 1994). Some participants believed it was their Korean heritage that prohibited them from completely entering the "white" world. As a result, some began to hate their physical traits. In addition, they understood that to be white brought certain privileges and to be Korean equaled second-class citizenship. Thereby, some Korean adoptees wanted to "be white"; just like their friends, parents, and community.

For some Korean adoptees, losing their true selves not only applied to their feminine selves; they must further surrender their true racial selves to find acceptance with their peers. Pipher (1994) believes that "girls can be true to themselves and risk abandonment by their peers or they can reject their true selves and be socially acceptable" (p. 38).

The following accounts bring to life some of the harsh realities that these young women faced as they felt impelled to relinquish their Korean background to gain friendships. Often, the participants talked about how they believed that if they were white then all of their problems would disappear. They also felt that they would be fully accepted in their schools and communities.

Christine believed that she was not as good as her white friends because of her Korean background. When she realized that being Korean separated her from the popular group, she began to hate her Korean racial features. She stated that:

> I felt very inferior. I felt that I wasn't good enough for them [whites]. And being popular was my goal. That's the only thing that I focused on at that time [in middle and high school]. I wanted to be in the popular group but they wouldn't accept me. I think in middle school I hated being Asian. I just didn't like it because in the popular group, no one was Asian. No one else was different. Everyone was Caucasian. I wanted to be Caucasian. I felt like, "Well, if I wasn't like this [pointing to her face], maybe they wouldn't look down upon me." Or "If I looked just like them, if I dressed like them, and then I was American [white] just like them, then they would accept me." It was like a big identity crisis. I didn't want to be Korean at all. It just made me feel a lot of insecurity because I wasn't very confident in myself.

Ana also thought that if she would be free from being separated from others in her school and from racist attacks if she were not Korean. She stated, "So many times I think it would be so much easier if I were Caucasian. If I was Caucasian, I wouldn't have to be so worried about being made fun of by my peers."

The young women in this study also felt as though their Korean heritage and physical traits led some of their peers to ignore them. Sophie, for example, believed that people ignored her because of being Korean.

> Oh, if I were white, they'd talk to me more often ... They were probably like "Oh, she doesn't know because she's Korean." They wouldn't really talk to me because they didn't know about [being Korean and adopted]. If I had been like them, then maybe I would have had more friends or had more confidence about myself ... maybe.

Another factor that plays a part in the women's lives is the desire to have dating partners (Orenstein, 1994). For many women, having a person interested in them, as a dating partner, was another form of feeling accepted and wanted (Griffiths, 1995; Pipher, 1994). The young women in the study were also seeking dating partners, however, they felt that they were not necessarily "ideal" partners. The participants talked about how some whites did not believe in interracial dating, especially in a predomi-

nantly white community. The young women also believed that there was too much of a cultural difference for them to "get along well."

Christine believed that she would have more white males interested in her if she were white. She stated:

> When I am in an American group I feel very inferior like I can't match up or something. And it's more American with guys. But I still feel inferior with girls too. I think every girl compares herself to other girls and wishes they were just as pretty as her or wish they had her height or whatever. But I have one thing added on—my Asianness. You know, it's like I have to deal with my Asianness too and compare my Asianness to this American [white] girl and now I feel really inferior.

The stereotypes of Asian in the popular media also had a negative impact upon Korean adopted young women's lives. These stereotypes consist of the model minority, academically inclined achievers, quiet, forever foreigners, non-English speakers, martial arts experts, etc. (Lee, 1996; Tuan, 1997). The stereotype adds to the difficulties Asian American young women face as they attempt to be recognized and have their voices heard. Specifically, for Asian women, the stereotypes typically relate to their sexuality with emphasis on being submissive and exotic. These stereotypes may add to the overall belief that they are "ideal" partners, especially in comparison to the more "liberated" American (Western) woman. For the young women in the study, they recognized these stereotypes that inhibit Asian American women. However, they also seemed to feel as though interracial and cross-cultural dating might not allow them to be "ideal" partners in their predominantly white communities.

As the young women in this study began seeking dating relationships, most of them talked about how these stereotypes affected their decision-making and attempts to build relationships with white men. They felt more compatible with white men rather than Asian men due in part to their cultural upbringing. However, since the media portrays Asian women in a negative light, far distant from that of which they considered the "ideal" partner, these young women expressed difficulty in building relationships with white men. Again, Christine remarked upon the different way people look at her because of her Korean background.

> I've realized that Asians have this stereotype, through the media, that Asians are not looked upon as these awesome people. They're looked upon as nerds. I feel like every time I meet someone I think that they think of me as: "Oh, she's Asian, I'm better than her." Throughout the media it's just like white people are the dominant race ... If I were American [white], maybe [white] guys would be more interested in me. I just don't think that I'm good enough for American [white] guys. Like they don't want interracial dating. I

> know that that's probably a major issue with American [white] guys. So I feel like they're not going to pay attention to me.

Ana felt as though Asian women were portrayed in the media as easy targets for men, which did not make her feel very good about herself. She stated, "I think [white] guys would actually want to date Asian women because they [men] want someone different and easy to get ... It makes me feel like people view me as a little slut." Catie exemplifies how negative Asian women stereotypes pushed her to believe that to be Asian was not considered a positive attribute in her life. She shared that:

> In the media, Asian women are looked at as submissive. That they'll do anything for the guy and it drives me crazy because I'm not submissive. I'm confident enough that I'm not going to be submissive to a guy. They're going to have to treat me as an equal. But that's just how Asian women are looked at. They really don't have any personality, they're not very funny, they're just these people that cook your food and are completely submissive to the guy ... I also put these stereotypes on Asians. How do I get out of putting these stereotypes on Asians? I catch myself doing that because of the media and the way I grew up in American [white] society. So I feel very American. And again, I feel like I'm an American trapped in an Asian body. So I'm going to think the same way an American is going to think. I don't know how to stop this. Until I finally have my identity and stop watching TV, I don't' think I can stop this way of thinking. I think I'm just going to quit watching TV.

Catie's above statement portrays the dilemma that most Korean adopted young women in this study dealt within their lives. They were raised in a white cultural household, surrounded by white cultural beliefs, which seemed to result in believing in the same Asian stereotypes. This may have led some of the participants to not only having negative attitudes about Asians in general, but more significantly they may have possessed negative self-attitudes. Furthermore, because of these negative self-attitudes as well as feeling as though they were Americans, some of the young women in the study talked about how they wished they were white. However, society often reminded them that they were different, not real Americans. It was typically during these instances that the participants' sense of belonging suffered the most (Kim, 1978).

In addition, the racist assaults that were described above led some of the participants to determine that they were not exclusively accepted in their white settings. Wanting to be white, but not finding acceptance, forced some adoptees to search for acceptance in their local Korean communities.

In an attempt to gain some knowledge of what they had lost due to their transcultural adoptee experience, some participants discussed ways in which they attempted to venture into the Korean community. Inside the

Korean community, adoptees talked about how they felt some sense of security because everybody around them finally shared similar physical traits. However, culturally these young women had little knowledge of Korean values, norms, and ethics. Therefore, they were once again left to feel like an outsider in a community they were attempting to fit into.

Michelle, Catie, and Emma all resided in an urban setting where there was a local Korean church. Ana lived about one hour from a Korean church. The four university women, Sophie, Christine, Sarah, and Julie, resided on a college campus where there was an active Korean community.[2] Some participants discussed the reasons why they chose to enter the Korean community. For the most part they wanted to find some connection with their Korean background. Some felt that maybe this group would accept them because they shared the same Korean background. Other participants talked about how they felt shunned by the Korean community because of their adopted background. They also told me about how they felt uncomfortable with "Korean" people. They felt that Koreans also looked down upon them because they did not know Korean culture (e.g., how to speak and act Korean). This was one of the main reasons why some of the participants opted to remain removed from the Korean community. The following passages describe the participants' experiences and feelings of highs and lows in their endeavors to join the Korean community.

When Sophie first arrived on the college scene, she told me that she had thoughts of attempting to make friends with other Asian students. She did not feel as though she belonged with this group of students. However, after sometime, she was able to meet other Korean adoptees on campus through the Asian American Women's Group. She stated that:

> It's just that I see a group that might be Asian and it doesn't feel like that's my group. I don't really want to go to them and I'm not really welcome into it. I don't feel like I'd fit in. I don't know exactly what that is, if it's my own personal thing about not being comfortable or am I making this up? Is it just in my mind? I feel like they're looking at me a little strangely.

In view of not having access to other Koreans/Asians for the majority of their lives, not feeling a connection with Koreans/Asians was not an uncommon feeling for many Korean adoptees. To walk into the unknown could be a frightening experience for anyone and for some it is easier to remain with people who are more like them. In the case of Korean adoptees, they were associated with other Koreans and Asian Americans because of their appearance. However, culturally they were white, middle class Americans. Therefore, they did not feel culturally connected with Koreans/Asians.

Some of the participants discussed the dilemma of looking Korean, but not understanding what being Korean meant and how this made them feel uncomfortable. Catie, for example, shared that:

> I like going there. I think, this is who I am or this is where I can belong. I really like to see all these people and learning about the cultural stuff that I missed out on. It's like I missed out on learning how to speak because I was adopted. Therefore, I like going to the church for Korean language class. However, I can't fully feel like I belong there because they know the traditions; the way they talk, they know all these different things, but they don't know about the adopted part. They know about the Korean part but they don't know the adopted part so therefore we [Korean adoptees] can't really belong there.

Most of the participants felt as though they were unable to make a connection with Koreans because of a cultural divide. This made some of them believe that they could not feel accepted in the Korean community. However, Michelle described her feelings of being connected with some Koreans because they assisted her in feeling proud about being Korean. She stated that:

> At the church you can only feel comfortable about the Korean part. I like going there and I still want to go there … There is a part of me that wants to learn the Korean way. Because just seeing how some of the people that were in the youth group, they were role models. And just to see how they acted toward things in school and it didn't affect them that much that they were Korean. And I was thinking that maybe I shouldn't make a big deal out of it and maybe that helped a little to not feel as bad in school.

The Korean church was one way for the young women to gain an inside look into what Korean and Korean American culture resembles. Moreover, the church gave them an opportunity to see positive Korean role models, which were typically absent in their schools and communities. These role models, in the opinions of some participants, were confident and proud of the Korean heritage.

While the Korean church was one way in which some participants attempted to gain Korean cultural knowledge, Julie was able to spend some time with a Korean family. During the time of this study I introduced Julie to the Kim family—Mr. and Mrs. Kim and their three children ages 13, 11, and 9 years old. Mr. Kim was studying for his Ph.D. in Higher Education at the local university, while his children attended elementary school.[3]

Julie spent time with this family over the weekends. Each gathering was marked with Korean food and long conversations over a variety of topics. During her visits she learned how to cook some Korean dishes, some Korean language speaking skills, and overall a sense of how a Korean fam-

ily functions on a daily basis. Mrs. Kim and the eldest daughter Hyunyee were especially helpful in their attempts to make Julie feel at home. They would often speak to her in English (something Mr. Kim had trouble remembering that Julie could not understand Korean), and often asked if she needed anything.[4]

Julie, nevertheless, felt somewhat out of place in this environment. She told me that she felt uncomfortable sometimes because she often felt like an outsider when she was with the Kim family. She tried to justify her loneliness by stating there exists a language and cultural barrier between them. Moreover, she revealed that:

> In a way I feel like they [the Kim family] look down upon me. I know that they accept me as Korean but they put me in a separate category—this other category of, you're the one that doesn't speak Korean. That's really hard. That almost makes me feel like I don't even want to deal with trying to learn Korean culture. I don't want to go back to my Korean identity. I just want to reject it. Because, when I'm with the Koreans, it just hits me in the face that I don't know Korean culture and therefore I am American ... Now I realize I can do something about it and I'm going try to do something. It's put a lot more motivation into me. But I need to do something about this because before I was thinking that I don't know Korean. Whenever I am with the Korean group I always wonder what it would be like if I spoke their language and was part of that culture. Sometimes I resent the fact that I was adopted. I wish that I could be a part of this culture. But I can't. I can't be a part of it, because I didn't grow up in it. And it wasn't my fault. But I sometimes resent being adopted. If I'm Korean, I want to be part of that culture.

Julie's attempts to make connections with Koreans characterized the dilemma most of the other participants had when they attempted to enter into a Korean community. In the beginning, they talked about feeling excited about "seeking" out their Korean roots. However, after awhile, the differences between them and the Korean community only proved that they did not belong in this group.

Some of the young women began to resent being adopted because it kept them separate from the people who shared their racial background. They seemed to understand that it was not their fault that they were adopted into white homes and nurtured differently from Koreans, but they tended to believe that Koreans and Americans would "never" understand their unique experiences and situations.

However, some of the participants talked about their experiences with other Korean adoptees and how being with others who shared the same background allowed them to find some comfort and acceptance in their lives. In the presences of other Korean adoptees, the participants discussed how they felt that they were now full members of group. They revealed that

they were no longer worried about being rejected because of their race or their cultural background. They were able to immerse themselves into a culture where the majority of them shared a similar history—a transcultural adopted background. The following section delves into the idea of how some of the participants "emerged" from their white surroundings and comfort in being Korean, Adopted, and American.

ACCEPTING KOREAN, ADOPTED, AND AMERICAN IDENTITIES

As a result of some of the participants building relationships with other Korean adoptees, an acceptance of their unique backgrounds and experiences evolved. These relationships were mainly established while they were attending an annual Korean Culture Camp for Korean adoptees. They described their time at camp as the only period out of the whole year where they truly felt confident in themselves; where they found personal contentment and tranquility in knowing that they were not alone in the world. The following accounts give insight into how these young women felt once in an environment that appreciated them for who they were rather than based upon their outer appearance. They were not worried about racist attacks from the white community nor were they concerned about being ostracized by the Korean community because they were unable to speak and act Korean. They were in an environment where they felt as though their life finally had some meaning and connection, and more importantly they felt as though they were not alone in the world.

Most of the young women talked about how they felt free from the pressure to find acceptance from their white peers and were able to enjoy just being themselves in the presence of other Korean adoptees. Ana stated, "I appreciate being there [Korean Culture Camp] because that's the only time I feel 100% welcomed and wanted. I'm the same as everyone. I only have to worry about, what I am I going to do today." Emma also talked about how she felt as though she no longer had to be somebody else. That she could finally be herself. She shared that:

> I wouldn't stand out in anyway and just because of that reason I can actually 100% be myself … And camp, the people there are just like you, they understand you, and you feel comfortable … You can't go to school and have a place where everyone is like that because at school you're different. But at camp, you have this thing in common—being Korean adoptees … Just being able to act anyway I want and not feel as though I might say something wrong was a wonderful feeling.

Julie exemplified the feeling of being fully accepted during her time at camp and how this made her believe that camp was the best place for her. She stated that:

> I was just so happy that I could be myself. I never felt inferior. It was just my place of identity where I felt like this is where I fit in, this place right here. I finally had someplace where I fit in. I can't completely fit into American society because I feel too inferior. I can't fit into Korean society, due to language and cultural barrier.

> What's hard for me is that it [Korean Culture Camp] takes place only once-a-year! I finally get to go to a place where I feel safe, where I feel comfortable, where I feel like I'm around people that understand me … If I had been able to grow up that way, and if I always had those role models to say, "You're Korean, be proud of yourself" instead of always feeling "I'm American, I don't know what that means," I think I would have been a little more confident.

The importance of camp in the participants' lives is illustrated in the following examples where the young women discussed how camp changed their outlook on life and how they would be devastated if they could not attend the annual camp. Michelle stated:

> If I ever have to go one summer without being able to go [to camp], I wouldn't be able to focus. I wouldn't be able to know that someone is adopted … My mom told me that we might have to start school in July. I would skip school because I wouldn't care about the attendance policy. I wouldn't care if I'd have to take the final exam early because that week is the most important thing to me. My final exams would be secondary. Even grades would be second after that … If I wouldn't be able to go, I'd just die. I wouldn't be able to, because it's like you end your school year, and then you go to camp. It's the thing you do before you go to school next year. It's to boost your spirits up or self-confidence by yourself before you have to go back to school.

Along the lines of missing camp for one summer, Catie talked about how it would be to go to camp throughout the entire year. She commented that:

> We [other campers] made up this thing about how we should go to Camp for school and have those classes be our classes. And we had this all planned out. We believed that we could just live there year round. When we're together at camp, I wish I could just live there.

Following this theme, Emma stated that:

> [Camp] was my only place, anywhere, where I felt I had some connection, like there were people out there just like me going through the same struggle, the same situations. I would go home every time camp would be over and I would fall asleep thinking of how badly I wished that my whole life could be just like that, like I could live my life at that camp, be around those people, and be around those role models.

The major problem the Korean adopted young women talked about was the need to find acceptance in their daily lives and as a result they felt that there was little choice of which group to identify with. Some of the young women tended to find comfort in their white communities because it was culturally easier to belong in this group. However, throughout their lives, they typically believed that the white dominant community would continue to remind them that they are not white and therefore they did not fully belong. The Korean community, on the other hand, did not embrace the Korean adopted young women because they did not possess cultural understanding and/or language skills. Attending Korean Culture Camp and being around other Korean adoptees provided opportunities for the participants to find a group of people in which they could identify.

Researchers have concluded that most Korean adoptees have auspiciously assimilated into white middle class homes, have shown little mental health problems, and are successful in their schools (Kim, 1977, 1978; Kim, 1995; Kim et al., 1979). Kim (1995) states that the Korean adoptees "may be so integrated that they may not face psychological dilemmas of identity formation, especially ethnic identity" (p. 152). Conforming to white American society has lead researchers to believe that the transculturally adopted children encounter few problems in their lives and therefore the general U.S. public views these children as normal average children.

The majority of U.S. families adopting internationally are white middle class with little knowledge and/or contact with their adopted child's ethnic heritage. Some families may attempt to "Americanize" their adopted child as quickly as possible so that she can feel accepted in her new environment (Kim, 1977, 1978; Mullen, 1995; Trolley, Wallin, & Hansen, 1995; Zuniga, 1991).

Some parents make efforts to include parts of their child's Korean identity in the family (Mullen, 1995). However, for the most part, Korean adopted children are raised in contradiction. On one side they are rejected by the white dominant society because of their minority status. And on the other side they are isolated from their own ethnic (Korean) community due to lack of cultural and ethnic knowledge and understanding (Kim, 1978). In this respect, Kallgren and Caudill (1993) state that these children often lack the "skills to interact with society that still fosters racial stereotypes and prejudices.... [In addition] children who are raised in homes

where their racial identities are denied typically develop an unhealthy emotional attitude toward their ethnic origins" (p. 552). Kim (1978) concludes that during the assimilation process, adoptees' racial-identity can suffer and may eventually lead them to feel ashamed about their ethnic heritage and those who are not "equipped with any ethnic identity and cultural heritage at all tend to suffer more as they grow older and participate in a broader societal process" (p. 483).

Through this research project, and talking with other adoptees about their experiences, many Korean adoptees have negative self-images, often complain about their Asian features, and more alarming wish that they were not "Asian" (Kim, 1978; Kim, 1995). In reference to the identity development models, which are discussed below, the participants showed signs of living the majority of their lives in the early stages of these models.

Since the late 1960s, racial and ethnic identity theories have been produced to gain a deeper understanding of how individuals journey through their lives in discovery of their ethnic, cultural, and racial selves (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997). Identity theorists believed a person in the early stage seeks acceptance in the white world and disengage herself from her ethnic and racial heritage. As an individual moves through the identity development stages, most scholars conclude that she will experience an identity crisis, with roots in the conflict of two or more cultures (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1993; Banks, 1994; Cross, 1971; Gay, 1978, 1985, 1999; Kim, 1981; Tatum, 1992). This crisis usually begins with a person's awareness and acceptance that she is a minority, different from the majority, which may lead to her interest in exploration and search of her own ethnicity. As an individual progresses and becomes more confident and secure in her identification, she may "immerse" herself into her racial and/or ethnic group. Further, she may attempt to rid herself of her white cultural foundations. Following this immersion stage, she may move toward becoming a bicultural being, where she usually does not desire to identify either with or against whites (Cross, 1971; Gay, 1985; Kim, 1981). For instance, Gay (1985) states that, "As individuals move through the transformation or reidentification process, they become more self-assured about their own ethnicity, and more embracing toward the ethnicity of others" (p. 49). Therefore, an individual might be able to blend her ethnic and/or racial identity with other ethnic and racial groups. As a result, she may move from her ethnic culture into a different culture with relative ease and without surrendering her ethnic and/or racial selves (Kim, 1981).

For the most part, I gained the impression that the identity models assumed that individuals made choices as they progressed through the stages. Such that, they were able to decide whether or not to immerse themselves into their own ethnic or racial group. However, for the participants, they talked about how their choices were limited because the groups

they wanted to join either rejected them or they could not feel as though they fully belonged.

Feeling as though they did not belong in either the white group in which they live and the Korean/Asian group in which they were born, some of the participants seemed to have found some comfort in their relationships with other Korean adoptees. From the above conversations about the importance of Korean Culture Camp in their lives, as well as other codes from the study, there appeared to be a distinct ethnic identity among Korean adoptees. Often, the young women talked about being "caught between two cultures," a feeling that they were not accepted by Koreans and Americans. This identity appeared to resemble an acceptance of their three distinct characteristics: Korean, Adopted, and American identities.

CLOSING REMARKS

There are unique circumstances that should be addressed by educators and communities to recognize the issues that are of concern for Korean adopted young women in their endeavors to find acceptance in their communities and achieve in their schools. Specifically, in this chapter, I discussed how the participants had difficulty in gaining acceptance in both the Korean community and the White community. Through this project, I intended to provide information on how these young women were contemplating their lives as culturally white, yet physically Korean.

I implied, through using the young women's own words, that they felt as though they were isolated and invisible in their schools and communities. Often, it appeared as though teachers and peers perceived them as the same as everybody else in the school. However, when issues of Asia or Korea came up in the classroom, the young women in this study were disgruntled with the fact that they were looked upon to answer these types of questions. Moreover, they were more upset that they did not have any, or very little, knowledge about their ethnic heritage.

Being perceived as "different" from other Asians may have provided some comfort for the young women in this study. While it appeared as though they were accepted in their white communities, there were a number of times when the participants were racially discriminated against in their classrooms and communities. Further, even their closest friends, at times, made comments that hurt the young women in this study. These incidents seemed to be reminders to the young women that they were not truly accepted and wanted in the white community and as a result some of them sought acceptance in the Korean community. However, because they did not have Korean cultural knowledge they often felt more like an outsider with Koreans than with white Americans.

The greater portions of these adoptees' lives were influenced by their white surroundings with little or no exposure to their ethnic background. Accordingly, the adoptive family normally did not acknowledge nor attempted to have interaction with their adopted child's culture that was both appropriate and beneficial (Kim, 1978). In addition, these children may feel uncomfortable in discussing issues with their parents due in part to the belief that their parents would not and/or could not understand. Kim et al. (1979) determined that the family's interaction and acceptance of Korean culture might result in a positive psychological development of the Korean adoptee. However, some families of Korean adoptees provided little, if any, exposure to their child's birth culture. Kim (1978) cites two main reasons for this response: (1) the families were not being provided with the resources and support groups to assist them in dealing with building a positive racial-identity in their child; and (2) "They saw 'no color or race or nationality' in their adopted foreign children and felt they were 'just like our own'" (p. 482).

By developing an idea of how Korean adopted young women's identity development looked slightly different from the existing models, I hope to better inform educators on how they can better relate to their transculturally adopted students. Ethnic and racial identity development models implied that as educators became more accustomed with these models, they would be able to create better race relations amongst racially diverse groups, better educate students of color, and understand the importance of identity development in each individual. Moreover, McAllister and Irvine (2000) concluded that these models "can assist educators in three areas: understanding teachers' behaviors (including resistance), sequencing course content, and creating conducive learning environments" (p. 5). Therefore, by making educators aware of how the Korean adopted young women in this study were unique and different from other Asian American students as well as other schoolgirls, I hope to provide new insight on how to provide a better learning environment for these young women.

This research also implies that parents of transculturally adopted Koreans should provide substantial and consistent exposure to Korean culture. I discussed in this paper how some of the young women were given tastes of Korean culture through entering the Korean church, spending time with Koreans, and attending Korean Culture Camp. However, I hope that parents, educators, and the Korean American community will attempt to acknowledge that Korean culture should be a part of Korean adoptees' lives. While I applaud and believe in the efforts of Korean Culture Camp, this once-a-year exposure is not enough. Furthermore, the Korean and Korean American community needs to recognize these individuals as a part of the Korean experience and should make strides to bring them into

the group, rather than making them feel as though they are less Korean or nonmembers.

Through consistent and positive exposure, I hope that these young women will have a stronger tie to their Korean ethnic background and better understand their unique position in the United States. As a result, I hope that they will build a stronger self-esteem and have more confidence, which may result in higher academic and social achievements.

NOTES

1. I recognize that "Americans" are made up of a variety of ethnicities, races, and multiethnic individuals. However, the term "American" throughout this paper will be used synonymously with "white." I base this decision on two main reasons: (1) whiteness is deeply ingrained throughout the United States (see Scheurich & Young, 1997); and (2) the participants in this study mostly used the term "American" to describe whites.

2. The Korean community was mostly made up of students who were from Korea. These "international" students had little contact with other Korean Americans and Asian Americans on campus. In addition, there were two Korean churches in their community (again mostly attended by students from Korea); however, none of the women in the study attended either of these churches.

3. The Kim family returned to Korea, at the end of the Spring 1998 term, upon Mr. Kim's graduation.

4. These weekly gatherings continued for about three months. After the Winter break, Julie returned to the house a few times. The Kim family offered Julie an open invitation to stay at their home in Korea at any time and that they would help her find a part-time job teaching English. Julie initially seemed excited that she now had a place to stay in Korea, as well as a support system to assist her while she was there. I offered to introduce the other university women to Korean families in the area. However, they did not seem too enthused about the idea. Sarah visited the Kim household once.

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CHAPTER 10

MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF ETHNIC PERSONS:

LISTENING TO KOREAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

Gilbert Park

INTRODUCTION

Asian Americans are one of the fastest growing groups in the United States. More than a million Korean Americans are included in this group, according to Census 2000, and the group will continue to grow (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2001). Although their population is growing, relatively few efforts have been made by social scientists to learn about who Korean Americans are and what issues they face.

In an effort to address this gap, I examined the assumption that one's ethnic identity is equal to her or his national ancestry by looking at Korean American college students' ethnic identification. I explored the lives and stories of seven Korean American students as they refined what it meant to be Korean American persons through social interactions with non-Korean American students as well as among themselves.

Overall, the students used two labels to describe who they were, Korean American and Asian American. However, the participants attached two

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very different meanings to the Korean American label: Koreans living in America or Americans with Korean heritage. To complicate the matter, most of the participants felt that using a label to describe who they were was very limiting. Instead, several participants used more than one label. These findings seem to suggest that equating one's ethnic identity with national ancestry may not best explain the Korean American students' ethnic sense of selves.

My understanding of Korean American college students' ethnic identity is informed by two views of ethnicity: primordialism and instrumentalism. At the risk of oversimplification, primordialists view ethnic groups as cultural groups (e.g., Cornell, 1988; Isaacs, 1975; van den Berghe, 1981). In his explanation of American Indian groups, Stephen Cornell (1988) posits that ethnic groups are "communities of culture, weaving in the course of years or generations web of sentiment, belief, world view, and practice that in turn help to sustain the group" (pp. 177–178). In this view, an ethnic group is a collection of individuals who share similar language, belief system, values, and other cultural aspects (van den Berghe, 1981, p. 80). In a similar vein, Harold Isaacs (1975) explains that "a newborn baby automatically acquires the relation of his family and his group and becomes at once an acknowledged holder of ethnicity that his people hold" (p. 39). Thus, membership in an ethnic group is acquired through birth. According to this view, Korean American college students' ethnic sense of selves as Korean Americans is acquired by virtue of birth.

On the other hand, instrumentalists view ethnic groups as interest groups (e.g., Bell, 1976; Cohen, 1969; Patterson, 1976; Portes & Bach, 1985), while the primordialists look at ethnic groups through the lens of culture. Abner Cohen (1969) explains "an ethnic group is an informal interest group whose members are distinct from the members of other groups within the same society in that they share a measure like kinship and religion, and can communicate among themselves as relatively easily" (p. 4). In other words, ethnic groups are made up of individuals who share biological and cultural traits and act collectively in order to achieve a common goal. Daniel Bell (1976) explains that the common goal is usually "protecting or gaining their places and privileges" (p. 45). Hence, membership in a cultural group is stressed because they see the benefits of its membership in pursuing their common interests. In doing so, they put their ethnic identification to use. This view of ethnic identity explains ethnic identification as "a strategic choice by individuals who, in other circumstances, would choose other group memberships as a means of gaining some power and privilege" (Bell, 1976, p. 171). To complicate the matter, some instrumentalists (i.e., Patterson, 1976) explain that one's ties to an ethnic group may change due to the circumstances of a given time. In doing so, one's ethnic identity may not be limited to that acquired through birth.

Although these theories have shaped the issues of ethnicity in profound ways, some concerns have been raised. Among those who raised concerns was Yen Le Espiritu (1992). Espiritu (1992) argues that national ancestry or origin is not necessarily equivalent to ethnic identity (pp. 7–8). Moreover, she further explains that equating ethnic identity to national ancestry is problematic because it "overlooks the internal diversity within an ethnic group" (Espiritu, 1992, p. 7) along the lines of language or dialect, region, and other categories. For instance, the political division of the Korean peninsula may shape Korean Americans from South Korea to see themselves quite differently from North Koreans. Also, linguistic differences between eastern and western South Korea may situate these Korean Americans to not see themselves as one group. Furthermore, recent studies (Espiritu, 1992; Lee, 1996; Min, 1996; Tuan, 1998) acknowledge panethnic identity as a possible identification for people of color who still maintain strong ties to a more specific ethnicity.

I explored the issues of ethnic identity for Korean American college students in relation to primordial and instrumental perspectives of ethnicity. This paper is important because it offers a unique look at ethnic identification within an educational setting, which may add to the body of knowledge on ethnicity. As Korean American youths move to campus and away from their ethnic communities, they leave their direct social controls and supports. Furthermore, these young adults encounter different ways of looking at the world and themselves at higher educational institutions. Here, they may become a part of politically active ethnic and panethnic student organizations. Adding to this, universities often offer unique opportunities for students to meet and interact with people of different backgrounds and interests. These features of higher education may situate many Korean American college students to reevaluate who they are and how they fit in the larger society. With that in mind, I sought to highlight some ways that the university experience helped to shape these students' ethnic identities as a way to make suggestions on how educators could better serve Asian American students.

METHOD

Research Procedure

Data were gathered through taped open-ended interviews, casual conversations, and participant observations. Participant observations took place from September of 1998 to October of 1999. I attended student organization meetings, visited churches, studied with students at libraries, and spent time with them in various social settings. Formal interviews were

taped at their apartments, the student union, student organization offices, restaurants, and on the streets. Two to four interviews were conducted with each participant. Taped interviews ranged from 30 minutes to two hours.

Participants

Seven Korean American undergraduate students were interviewed and observed many times in various settings: Byungu, Debra, Hyesun, Jack, Karla, Mary, and Romi. (All the names of persons, locations, organizations and others are pseudonyms assigned to protect their true identities.) Two of the participants were men, and the rest were women. Four participants (Debra, Hyesun, Jack, and Karla) were second generation Korean Americans, and three were born in Korea. Two (Mary and Romi) of the three who were born in Korea were adoptees who came to the United States as infants. The other (Byungu) immigrated before he turned ten years old. All of them were members of either or both KSC (Korean Student Club) and SKS (Students for Korean/Korean American Studies), so they knew of each another. All except Byungu came from middle to upper middle class families. Byungu said he lived in a one-bedroom apartment with his parents in California before he came to college. While these differences in the participants' backgrounds may have affected how they viewed themselves, the way that they made sense of their surroundings and understanding of themselves in relation to others in the university seemed to be similar. With this in mind, I focused on their current situation on campus and did not include how these differences might have influenced their sense of selves in this study.

Research Setting

The site of the data collection was a large midwestern university. Situated in a midsize city that houses the state government, it is the second largest city in the state. The students, faculty, and staff of this university are predominantly European Americans, and there are a small number of people of color on campus. The participants said that many European American students on the campus told them that they were the first persons of color that they encountered. Most of the students live in dormitories or apartments on campus. This provides an opportunity for interracial interactions on a daily basis. Consequently, the informants' lives were largely entwined with the university's social environment. The informants' experiences on campus combined with their experiences prior to college seemed to reshape how they identified ethnically.

Insider or Outsider: Relating to the Informants

As I reflect on my position as the researcher for this study, neither "insider" nor "outsider" best describes my relationship with the participants. On one hand, I am an insider because I am Korean American, so I was able to relate to many issues that the interviewees talked about during the interviews. On the other hand, I am an outsider to some participants' experiences. For instance, since I am not an adoptee I was unable to relate to some of the participants experiences as adoptees. Instead, my identity has allowed me with an "in-between" perspective. As it has done for Lee (1997) in her research on Hmong American women, this in-between status has invited more "open and honest conversations" (p. 807) with the participants.

KOREAN AMERICAN IDENTITY: KOREAN OR AMERICAN?

The assumption that one's ethnic identity equals her or his national ancestry (or parents' national ancestry) may not fully explain the Korean American participants who attached very different meanings to the Korean American label. In this section, I will discuss the two meanings that the students attached to the Korean American label: One, *jaemi kyopo*, and the other, Americans with Korean heritage. One group of students called themselves *jaemi kyopo* to mean that they were Koreans living in America although they were American citizens. In doing so, they emphasized Korean heritage as more important than their Americanness. On the other hand, the other group of students felt that they were Americans with Korean heritage. These students felt their national ancestry was an important part of who they were, but they stressed that they were Americans.

Jaemi Kyopo: Koreans Living in America

Kyopo is a Korean word that refers to ethnic Koreans living in other countries (Kim, 1951). For instance, ethnic Koreans living in Japan are *kyopo* as well as those who are living in the United States. To specify where these ethnic Koreans live, words like *jaemi* (living in the United States) and *jaeil* (living in Japan) are attached to the word *kyopo*. For instance, ethnic Koreans in Japan are called *jaeil kyopo* to indicate that they are living in Japan while ethnic Koreans in America are called *jaemi kyopo* to specify that they live in America.

Debra and Karla were two of the participants who said they were *kyopo* when I asked them to think of a term that best described who they were. Their parents came to the United States in the early 1970's. Both were

born and raised in a metropolitan area of the same state where the university is located. Debra was a nineteen-year-old woman when I first met her. She spent her first year of college at a smaller university in her hometown. She said she needed to stay there in order to help her parents run their small business. After a year, she decided to transfer to this university because her parents wanted her to. Although she lived away from home now, she went home every weekend to help at her parents' business. Karla, twenty, is Debra's older cousin. Karla left home right after high school to attend this university. She said that she came to the university because she always envisioned herself being here, and her brother has recently graduated from the same university. At the time of the data collection, it was her third year away from home, and she goes home at least one night a week because her parents want her to.

Debra and Karla felt that being an ethnic Korean was an important part of their sense of selves. When I first met Debra, she was wearing clothing and accessories that were purchased in Korea. These were the popular styles in Korea at that time, but there were not many people with these styles on campus. Debra told me that she had a lot of fun last summer when she spent time taking classes at a university in Seoul. It was the first time she spent a whole summer in Korea without her parents, and this gave her the opportunity to interact with Korean young people whom she had come to like very much. She said that she hoped to marry a Korean man with a lot of money sometime so she could live in Korea.

Karla didn't dress in the latest Korean fashion like Debra did. However, Karla was up-to date with the popular culture of Korea. When I visited her apartment one day, Karla was playing one of the latest music hits from Korea. Together with Debra, Karla could relate all the gossip of the entertainment world in Korea ranging from who was dating whom to who was cheating on whom. Karla rented videotapes from a local Korean grocery store to watch Korean shows and movies that were broadcast in Korea. Although she had some difficulties in formulating a complex sentence in Korean, she claimed to understand everything that was said in the show. Karla was planning on spending next summer in Korea to take Korean language classes and to meet other Korean young people just as Debra did.

For Debra and Karla, their experiences on campus may have strengthened their sense of selves as Korean Americans. Coming from predominantly white communities, these two women had minimal contact with other Korean Americans of their age. The university campus, on the other hand, provided an opportunity for them to socialize with other Korean Americans who shared similar cultural values and language. By removing young people from home, the network of friends becomes more salient while on campus than family support. The network of friends that Debra

and Karla embraced was the social network of Korean American students, specifically, other *jaemi kyopos.*

To be a *jaemi kyopo,* one needed to be well versed in the language and culture of the United States in addition to being an ethnic Korean. On a Sunday evening, I ran into Debra and Karla at a library. They were talking to another Korean American woman about a Korean American man who asked Debra to go to a movie with him. I asked her, "who is this guy?" Karla told me the name of this man, and I thought this person was an international student from Korea since he had a Korean name. Debra was quick to correct me by saying that this man is a *kyopo* from Chicago. Sometime later, she added that he was born in Chicago (a native to this country) and spoke English without an accent. She summarized him by saying, "he was born here [in the U.S.] like me." Karla later told me that Debra really liked the way this *kyopo* man dressed. She said that he dressed in the popular style of Korea. When I was introduced to him the next day at the library, I noticed that he liked to mix Korean words into English sentences. Perhaps, this was the way for him to show his close identification with Korean culture; however, my data cannot support this since he wasn't interviewed.

Debra used mastery of the English language to sort out kyopos from non-kyopos. The mastery of the English language, shown in the ability to speak without an accent, tells Debra that one has been born and raised in the United States. At the same time, such a person also needed to demonstrate her or his close identification with Korean culture. Seeing herself as a *kyopo,* Debra used herself as a model to which other Korean Americans were compared in order to assess *kyopo* status. Karla also thought that a kyopo was someone who knew "how things are" in the United States, however, a *kyopo* does not have to be born in the United States. She said that, "you could come [to the U.S.] when you are five years old and still pretty much be a *kyopo.*" In doing so, Karla expanded the definition of being a *kyopo* to include those who are not born in the United States.

Americans with Korean Heritage

While students who called themselves *kyopo* stressed their close identification with Korea, others like Jack and Romi more closely identified with America than Korea. Hence, they stressed that they were Americans instead of Koreans in America. Although they emphasized that they were Americans, they did not want to downplay their Korean heritage, either. Hence, they explained that they were Americans with Korean heritage.

Romi was born in a small village in Korea and spent a few years in an orphanage in a nearby town until a Euro-American family adopted her. She said she was grateful toward her adopted parents who had been supporting

her academic interests by sending her to a prestigious private high school and financing her college education. Romi did not remember much of the time she spent in Korea, and most of her childhood memories concerned her life in the United States. Growing up in a rural community in the same state as the university, Romi had very few opportunities to interact with other Korean American people until she came to this university.

The university played an important role in forming Romi's sense of self as an American with Korean heritage by providing instruction in Korean language and culture. Taking advantage of this opportunity, Romi made new connections with Korean culture, language, and people. In two Korean classes that she took at the university, she learned to read, speak, and write functionally in Korean. Also, she has come to know other Korean American students who welcomed her into the network of Korean American students on campus. In the process, she became interested in finding out more about her roots in Korea.

After a year at this university, Romi spent a summer taking classes at a university in Korea where she also sought to get in touch with her biological parents without success. Romi chose not to discuss the process of searching for her biological parents for personal reasons, but she said that it was an eye opening experience. Since that time, she has gotten involved with Korean American student organizations on campus and surrounded herself with other Korean American students. By the time of the data collection, she was more comfortable with speaking Korean than many other participants. In fact, Romi was one of two participants who spoke Korean during the interview.

During the interview Romi said that she was a Korean American because she was raised in America but was born in Korea.

GP: Is there a label that best describes who you are? What would you call yourself?

Romi: What do you mean?

GP: I feel that the label Korean American would best describe who I am. Is there a label like that you would use?

Romi: Well, I guess I can also use that to call myself. I mean I would call myself Korean American, too.

GP: Can you tell me what does "Korean American" mean to you?

Romi: Korean American to me is an American person who is from Korea. Like I am an American in many ways. My [adopted] parents are American, my [adopted] brothers and sisters are Americans, and I am an American just as much as they are. Although I am not white

like they are, I feel very, very American. But, at the same time, I feel Korean.

GP: Can you tell me more about feeling Korean?

Romi: You know, my biological parents are Korean. [a long pause] I don't remember what they look like or anything, but I know … I mean the fact that I was born in Korea means something, you know? I feel that I was born as a Korean and raised as an American.

Romi's sense of self as a Korean American challenges the primordialists' understanding of ethnic identity. She does not see herself as a Korean American because she shares common culture with other Korean American students who were socialized into Korean American culture. During their upbringing, other Korean American students (like Debra, Karla, Jack and other participants) interacted with other Korean Americans on a regular basis (like at church or community gatherings). Through their interactions they learned culturally appropriate ways to behave and carry themselves. Also, their Korean American parents have influenced their world views. The process through which young members of a cultural group are socialized into their culture is well documented in other studies like Zhou and Bankston (1998). Romi, on the other hand, was raised in a completely different setting by European American parents who instilled their mainstream American world views in her. Also, she had very few chances to interact with other Korean American people while growing up. Consequently, Romi was socialized into white middle class culture since the adoption, and her cultural values have little in common with Korean American students like Debra. Debra who roomed with Romi called her a "banana girl." She explained that Romi looks like a Korean person outwardly but she thinks and acts like a white person. Although Romi seems white to Debra, she has chosen to identify herself as a Korean American person. Hence, instrumentalism may better explain Romi's ethnic sense of self. Romi's ethnic identity as a Korean American person seems to be a matter of choice, motivated by her interests in finding out about her Korean roots.

Jack was another person who called himself a Korean American. Jack is from a midsize city that's racially diverse but segregated. His parents run a flea market that sells everything from nail clippers to tricycles. When I visited him there on a very hot summer day, Jack was working at his parents' store with his brother. Jack and his brother have worked for their parents since they were in grammar school. Now that Jack was in college he only helped out during summer break, and his brother who worked at an office helped only on weekends. Like other small Korean American businesses around the country (including Debra's family), their business catered to

African Americans, Latino/as, and working class whites. Jack does not get paid for the hours he puts in at his parents', but he feels that he is obligated to volunteer since it was their livelihood that put bread on the table and paid his tuition at the university.

On campus, Jack was not easy to spot in the crowd. With his baseball hat pushed down, Jack walked around the campus hurriedly from one class to another. Jack often socialized at the local karaoke bar where he spent at least one Friday night a month. This bar was known among Korean American students on campus as a place to meet other Korean American students. On weekends, many Korean American students frequented this bar. At the time of the data collection, the president of the Korean American Student Club (KSC) was a bartender there. Also, the fact that they had a large volume of Korean songs available for karaoke attracted many of them. Jack and his friends would take turns buying a pitcher of beer for one another. Filled with smoke, loud music, and constant laughs, this bar resembled any other bar around campus. The only difference is that the majority of the patrons were Asian Americans, most of whom were Korean Americans.

Jack said that he was both Korean and American because he was an American from Korea.

> **GP**: What would you call yourself?
>
> **Jack**: I'm a Korean American.
>
> **GP**: What do you mean by that? Can you explain what that means to you?
>
> **Jack**: Well, I mean … I am an American and also Korean. No, that didn't sound right. I mean I am an American from Korea, you know what I mean? I was born here, I live here, and I haven't been there (Korea). So I am an American. But because my parents were born in Korea, they speak Korean, they cook Korean food, and … you know? Like I eat kimchi [a traditional Korean side dish that is served with every meal] and all other Korean food, and I really enjoy them. Like it's part of me. I am an American but Korean parts of me are very real, you know?

Although Jack was born here and had never been to Korea, he felt that he was from Korea because his parents were born there. Jack felt that his Koreanness was inherited from his parents who spoke Korean to him and prepared Korean food for him. In fact, he felt that these cultural traits of his parents were an important part of who he was. Because of his cultural background, he felt that he couldn't be just an American. This seems to support the primordialistic understanding of ethnic identity.

ASIAN AMERICAN IDENTITY

In addition to the two distinct meanings associated with the Korean American label, some Korean American students chose to adopt panethnic identity. In this section of the paper, I look at Byungu and Mary who chose to use a panethnic label, Asian American, to describe themselves.

Byungu was born in Korea, but came to the United States before he turned ten years old. Unlike other participants, Byungu grew up in Los Angeles' Koreatown. Byungu's family operates a small business that caters to other racial minorities (mostly African Americans and Latino/as). Like Jack, Byungu goes back home every summer to help out at his family's business. Also, Byungu was the only participant who was fully bilingual in that he was fluent in both written and spoken Korean and English. In addition to language, Byungu was well mannered in the Korean tradition. For instance, he was the only one who called me "hyung [it can be roughly translated into 'older brother']" instead of calling me by my name. In the Korean culture, it is considered to be rude to address an older person by one's name. Older people can be addressed by using a number of titles that are age and gender specific. Byungu called me "hyung" since I was a man and a few years older than he.

Although Byungu's knowledge about Korea is better than any other participant, he stresses that he is an Asian American.

> **GP**: Is there a term that best describes who you are? For instance, I would call myself a Korean American.
>
> **Byungu**: I am a Korean American, too. I am a Korean because my parents are Koreans. Also, I am an American because [pause] I became an American [citizen] after I turned 18 years old. But I think *it would be more appropriate to say that I am an "Asian American."* [author's emphasis]

Unlike other participants who were born in the United States or adopted by American families, Byungu was born in Korea as a Korean citizen. Once in the United States, his sense of self as a Korean seemed to change as he attended public schools where he swore allegiance to the flag of the United States. He said, "it just didn't make sense. I was pledging my allegiance to the United States, but I had a green card with a Korean passport." Byungu felt American, and it made sense for him to be naturalized as an American citizen when he became older. He has chosen to be an American.

> **GP**: Can you tell me a little more about being an Asian American?

> **Byungu**: I think that in order for Asian Americans to be fully accepted—I use the word accepted in terms of political and social status—Asian Americans should come together and really work together to make a difference. On this campus, I am a member of Asian American Together (AAT). I joined the group because of my ongoing frustration about the level of diversity [on this campus]. There are only a handful of Asian Americans on this campus, and I think that means something. And in order for a minority like us [Asian Americans] to receive equal treatment, equal political power and status, we [Asian Americans] have to come together.

Byungu's sense of self as an Asian American is more in line with instrumentalism. The reason for him to identify as an Asian American was politically motivated. He felt that Asian Americans did not enjoy political power and social status within the mainstream. In order to fight this, he said that he should align himself with other Asian Americans. Sometime later, Byungu told me that there was a reason for such a low number of Asian American students on campus. The reason, he argued, was that the university did not actively seek to recruit Asian American students. In fact, there was a half-time recruiter for Asian Americans on campus while there were full-time recruiters targeting African Americans, Latino/as, and American Indians. He felt that this was an example of the university's bias against Asian Americans.

Byungu felt that he could make a difference about the low number of Asian American students on campus by joining with other Asian American students. Hence, he got involved with AAT. He spent a lot of time at the organization's office, which was located at the multicultural center on campus. When I visited the organization's office, Byungu was in a meeting with Asian American student leaders to put together a packet that went out to high schools. The packet included flyers about AAT and it was an attempt to recruit more Asian American high school students to the campus.

This university enjoyed a reputation as a liberal institution. It has a long history of student activism and protests that often clashed with the administration as well as the state and the federal policies. Being a student activist, Byungu was well connected with the leaders of student organizations. Also, Byungu's political motivation seemed to have been influenced by his studies in political science. As a political science major, Byungu read many scholarly articles and books on social and political movements. Informed and empowered by these, Byungu became one of the leaders of AAT. Byungu's

sense of self as an Asian American, a panethnic identity, was a political choice. This choice was a response to what he saw as racism on campus.

Mary was also an adoptee from Korea. The Euro-American family that adopted Mary was economically comfortable, and her parents are well educated. In fact, Mary's adopted mother taught at a local college and her adopted father was a jeweler. She had three other siblings, two of whom were also adopted from Asia. She grew up in a small town where she and her two other siblings were some of very few persons of color.

Unlike Romi, Mary was adopted shortly after she was born, and she learned later that she was born in the city of Busan, the second largest city in Korea. Apart from where she was born, she had no recollection of her life in South Korea. She showed bitterness toward her biological parents who gave her up for adoption. However, she told me that she would like to go back sometime to locate her biological mother and find out why she gave her away for adoption. Her adopted parents took her to annual picnics for Korean adoptees when she was younger, and those meetings were few occasions when she encountered other adoptees from Korea.

Mary's sense of self was unique from other participants. While others felt that their Korean heritage, whether biological or cultural, was an important part of who they were, Mary did not feel right about calling herself a Korean or Korean American. Instead, she used a "generic" Asian American label to categorize who she was.

> **GP**: Is there a term that best describes who you are?
>
> **MV**: No, I guess I just go along with the whole generic Asian American. I don't like to say I'm Korean American because I'm not. Well, I am Korean. But, for one, I don't even know [if my biological parents were Koreans]. There had been speculation that one of my parents could have been Japanese or a part Japanese or whatever. So don't even know what nationality they are. I know that I was born in Korea, and I look Korean. But I don't know any thing about the culture or anything. So, I just kind of go along with I'm Asian American.

When asked how she called herself, Mary stressed that she was not a Korean American. She explained her sense of self as non-Korean American using biological and cultural reasons. First, she may not be Korean because one of her parents might not be ethnic Korean. Also, she said she wasn't Korean because she did not know Korean culture. This view is more in-line with the primordial view of ethnicity. In other words, one needs to have biological parents who are ethnic Koreans and possess some amount of knowledge about Korean culture. Mary, on the other hand, did not feel

that she met these conditions; hence, she did not see herself as a Korean American. *Kyopo* identified students like Debra and Karla would agree with Mary's definition of the Korean American label.

Instead of Korean American, Mary called herself an Asian American. She was an Asian American because she knew that she was an American but she "looks like an Asian or Korean (using Asian and Korean as a synonym) person." Similar to Romi, the other Korean adoptee in this study, Mary's sense of self as an Asian American could not be understood entirely through primordial or instrumental explanations of ethnicity. Mary's sense of self as an Asian American was based on the fact that she shared physical similarities with other Asian Americans rather than sharing a common culture or pursuing similar interests.

MULTIPLE AND SITUATIONAL ETHNIC SENSE OF SELVES

In addition to the use of Korean American and Asian American labels, the Korean American students' multiple and situational ethnic sense of selves seem to challenge the idea that national ancestry equals ethnic identity. My findings suggest that the Korean American students' ethnic sense of selves is multidimensional and dynamic (Espiritu, 1992).

Many social scientists of today would agree that ethnicity is socially constructed (e.g., Barth, 1969; Epstein, 1978; Lal, 1990). Ethnicity as a social construction implies that one's ethnic identity is not biologically nor culturally defined. Instead, it refers to the process of defining one's ethnic sense of self through social interactions with others. Related to the idea that ethnic identity is socially constructed is the idea that ethnic identity is situational. Different situations will highlight one or more ethnic identities of the person. In other words, a person's ethnic sense of self is not limited to the cultural group that he or she is born into. In addition to having a choice, the choice does not have to be with only one group. Instead, the person can have multiple senses of selves at any given time.

This phenomenon was most obvious in Hyesun. I learned from talking to Hyesun that a person could have more than one ethnic identity. In fact, Hyesun had a number of identities.

GP: Is there a label that you can use to describe yourself? Like I would call myself a Korean American.

Hyesun: Well, let's see. [a pause] You mean, "a" label like one?

GP: Whatever is good as long as you feel okay with them.

Hyesun: Well, I guess Korean American is one. Also, an American is the other. I am an Asian American. I guess that's about it.

Hyesun felt that she was American, Korean American, and Asian American. All these labels had special meanings, and these were important to her.

Hyesun was from the metropolitan area where Debra, Karla, and Jack were from. Although Hyesun was born in a different state, her family moved to this area when she was in fourth grade. Hyesun went to the same Korean church with Debra and Karla until she came to college. Going to the same church for years, Hyesun was a good friend of Debra and Karla, as well as their families. Although they went to the same church, all three of them went to different high schools since they lived some distance away from each other. Actually, each of them had to drive an hour or longer to go to that Korean church. Hyesun's father owned a computer firm. She said that she was from a traditional Korean family with a gender division of labor. For instance, her father took care of earning money while her mother was in charge of running the family. Her father was very good at what he was doing and spent a lot of time away from home. So she spent much of her childhood with her mother.

It appeared that her sense of self as a Korean American came from the special meaning she associated to the Korean language. In his controversial autobiography *Hunger of Memory*, Richard Rodriguez (1982) discussed his own association of home with his parents' Spanish language. Hyesun also seemed to equate home with Korean language. While Rodriguez felt that he had to pay the "high price" (giving up the fluency in Spanish to "make it" in middle class America through assimilation), she didn't seem to feel that she needs to pay this "high price" to make it. At any rate, Hyesun told me that going home meant speaking Korean. To Hyesun, home was where Korean was spoken, and being a Korean American meant speaking Korean. Hence, the Korean American identity was an important part of who she was.

At the same time, her sense of self as an American was very real. After all, she spent all of her life in America. Going through the public school system and living in a predominantly white area, most of her friends were European Americans who usually called themselves Americans. Hyesun had been socialized into American culture, and being an American was another important part of who she was.

To add to the complexity, Hyesun saw herself as an Asian American. Although her close friends included both European and Asian Americans, she said that she was more comfortable being in the company of other Asian Americans. She felt more comfortable with other Asian Americans because she felt that there was a common experience that she shared with them as Asian Americans on a predominantly white campus. Her association with Asian American friends on campus helped her to see herself as an Asian American. It was also an important part of who she was.

As discussed above, many participants mentioned more than one ethnic identity in describing who they were. For instance, Jack and Romi saw themselves as Americans and Koreans. Byungu saw himself as an American, an Asian American, and a Korean American. Mary saw herself as an American and an Asian American.

Adding to the multiple identities of Hyesun, she said that she would reveal a different part of her in different situations.

> **GP**: Can you tell me a little more about it? I mean, [a pause] let's say, a stranger would ask you where you're from. How would you respond to that stranger?
>
> **Hyesun**: I guess it depends on who's asking, you know? If a white person was to ask me, I guess I would say that I am an Asian American. But, sometimes I say that I am from Indiana. That's where I was born, you know. If an Asian [American] person asks me who I am, I would say I'm Korean. They can see that I'm an Asian, so obviously they want to know what nationality I am. So I would give it to him, I'm a Korean American. If a Korean person would ask me, I mean Koreans from Korea, I say to them that I'm a Korean American. Do you know what I mean?

She would reveal a different part of her depending on the ethnicity of an inquirer. From her experience, she learned that inquirers had a certain image of who she was before asking. She stressed to whites and Koreans that she was an American. Briefly put, since ethnic identity was a social construction, a different situation (or social environment) called for revealing a different part of her. Hence, ethnic identity was dynamic and fluid.

The way that Byungu identified himself in different situations also serves as an example of situational or fluid identity. While he was with other Asian American students (at AAT meetings for instance), Byungu stressed the need for Asian Americans to form a coalition to push the university into recruiting more Asian American students. In doing so, his sense of self as an Asian American was highlighted in the social environment with other Asian Americans. When he was in the company of some Korean Americans, Byungu preferred to speak in Korean instead. In doing so, Byungu's ethnic identity as a Korean American was revealed. At other times when he was in classrooms or other environments where he was the only Asian American, Byungu did not stress himself as an Asian American nor a Korean American. By downplaying racial or ethnic differences between himself and other classmates, he was drawing attention to their shared identity as Americans.

The discussion of Debra and Karla's sense of selves as *kyopo* seemed to fit nicely into linear explanations of primordialists. After all, Debra and Karla did not use any other label but *jaemi kyopo* as the description of who they were. In fact, they laid down some criteria of what constituted being *jaemi kyopo*, thereby, excluding some groups of people from the category. Also, it may be that their reference group was in Korea due to their recent trips to Korea. However, I think that their identification of *kyopo* may support the idea that ethnic identity is dynamic and situational.

In order to understand this, the social environment under which the interview took place must be noted. The interview took place at Debra and Karla's apartment where only me, the interviewer, and they were present. Because of this, Debra and Karla could have felt that there was a need to define who they were against the interviewer whom they thought was not one of them. As a result, they may have overly stressed their identity as *kyopos* over other identities they might have had. If this was true, the social environment influenced the presentation of their ethnic identity. This supports the argument that ethnic identity is dynamic and situational in nature. On the other hand, I have not had the opportunity to observe them in other social environments where other parts of their ethnic identities would have been highlighted to further support this argument.

DISCUSSION

Thus far, I have discussed some ways that the Korean American students saw themselves ethnically. My data showed that the Korean American students' ethnic identities did not necessarily equal their national ancestry or origin. First, those who identified themselves as Korean American attached very different meanings to the Korean American label: *jaemi kyopo* and American with Korean heritage. Hence, it seemed inaccurate to categorize them into one group just because they had the same national ancestry. Secondly, some of the participants like Byungu and Mary used the Asian American label to describe themselves. This panethnic label challenges primordial views of ethnic identity since Asia is not their national origin. At the same time, instrumentalism alone does not fully explain the participants' panethnic identification since Mary called herself Asian American only because she "looked like other Asians." This seems to imply that Mary was not actively choosing the pan-ethnic label. Lastly, my findings suggest the ethnic sense of selves for the Korean American students is multidimensional and dynamic. An ethnic person may identify the self by using different labels in different situations.

The findings also suggest that the university environment plays an important role in shaping these students' ethnic sense of selves. The aca-

demic environment of the university is very different from the K-12 schools that the participants attended. Among these differences was the availability of ethnic studies as well as more diverse language classes. None of the participants attended schools that offered Korean language or Asian American classes until they came to the university. For instance, taking the Korean language class was an opportunity for Romi, an adoptee, to reconnect with her cultural heritage. Also, Romi met other Korean American students in the class who introduced her to the social network of Korean American students. In doing so, Romi's sense of self as an American with Korean heritage was strengthened.

Adding to this, the social environment of the university also helped to shape the participants' ethnic identities. The university gave an opportunity to some participants, like Debra and Karla, to interact and socialize with other Korean American peers. Away from home, the social network of Korean Americans that Debra and Karla embraced on campus influenced them to narrowly define Korean American as *jaemi kyopo*. Within this environment, Debra and Karla drew the boundaries of *jaemi kyopo* and distanced from Korean international students. At the same time, the increased opportunity to interact with other Asian American students helped to affirm Byungu's sense of self as an Asian American. Being concerned about the political and social status of Asian Americans on campus, Byungu sought to align himself with the other Asian Americans. The availability of active political and racial student organizations have allowed Byungu to align himself with other Asian American students with similar political concerns. This in turn seemed to have helped him to strengthen his Asian American identity.

A couple of recommendations can be derived from the findings concerning the education of Asian American students. First, educators need to overcome stereotypical understandings of who their Asian American students are. They need to recognize the internal diversity within the students and attend to these differences in relating to the students. Secondly, educators need to realize that their teaching, as well as the school environment, may shape their students' ethnic identities. This suggests that educators are in a position to positively influence the way Asian American students view themselves. In doing so, they can help these students to develop positive self-images that may aid the students in reaching their full potentials.

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